

**THE RESPONSE OF ASIAN CHRISTIANS AND  
THE EAST ASIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE TO  
THE QUESTS OF EAST ASIA IN THE PERIOD  
1945 – 1968**

Peter Leung

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St Andrews



1972

Full metadata for this item is available in  
St Andrews Research Repository  
at:

<http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

Please use this identifier to cite or link to this item:

<http://hdl.handle.net/10023/13732>

This item is protected by original copyright

THE RESPONSE OF ASIAN CHRISTIANS  
AND THE EAST ASIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE  
TO THE QUESTS OF EAST ASIA IN THE PERIOD 1945-1968

A Thesis submitted by

P e t e r   L e u n g

in application for the degree  
of Ph.D. in the Faculty of Divinity  
in the University of St. Andrews



St. Andrews  
July 1972



ProQuest Number: 10166679

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10166679

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

Th 6099

### D E C L A R A T I O N

I hereby declare that the following Thesis is based on the results of research carried out by me, that the Thesis is my own composition, and that it has not previously been presented for a Higher Degree. The research was carried out in St. Mary's College, The University of St. Andrews, under the direction of Dr. John R. Fleming, Senior Lecturer.

---

Peter Leung

### C E R T I F I C A T E

I certify that PETER LEUNG was admitted as a Research Student under Ordinance General No.12 with effect from 1st October, 1969, and as a candidate for the degree of Ph.D. under Resolution of the University Court, 1967, No.1, with retrospective effect to the same date. He is therefore qualified to submit the accompanying Thesis in application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

---

Dr. John R. Fleming,  
Supervisor.

# LIST OF CONTENTS

	page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS .. .. .	i
ABBREVIATIONS .. .. .	iv
INTRODUCTION .. .. .	1
SECTION I : THE QUESTS OF EAST ASIA 1945-1968 .. .. .	10
1. The Quest for Freedom and Independence .. .. .	12
(a) The emergence of new nations .. .. .	14
(b) The Cold War .. .. .	16
(c) Bandung Conference - the defence of freedom and Asian solidarity .. .. .	19
2. The Quest for Economic Development .. .. .	21
(a) The problem of rapid population growth .. .. .	22
(i) The imperative of population growth control	23
(ii) The importance of agricultural development	26
(b) Injustice in international trade .. .. .	28
(i) The burden of foreign debts .. .. .	30
(ii) Progress towards self-reliance .. .. .	31
3. The Quest for Nationhood .. .. .	35
(a) The agony of transitional societies .. .. .	36
(b) The role of religion in the search for identity and foundations .. .. .	37
(c) The search for responsible government .. .. .	41
(d) The problem of participation and stability .. .. .	43
SECTION II : ASIAN CHRISTIAN RESPONSE, FIRST PERIOD, 1945-1957	50
<u>Chapter One: The Christian Assessments</u> .. .. .	52
1. A Grave Prospect for Christian Advance .. .. .	52
(a) Communism - "the most obvious menace" .. .. .	53
(b) Resurgent religions - "in violent conflict with Christianity" .. .. .	57
2. The Search for Positive Understanding .. .. .	60
(a) Communist expansion - an opportunity for Christian social witness .. .. .	61
(b) Resurgent religions - the need for Christian appreciation and understanding .. .. .	68
3. The Call for Christian Participation in National Life	70
(a) The need for identification .. .. .	72
(b) The first Asian Christian social involvements .	74
(c) The Lordship of Christ - the development of a new theological emphasis .. .. .	80
(d) Christian social involvement - a minority but important view .. .. .	82
4. The Urgent and Primary Task of the Church - Evangelism	85
(a) "The Unchanged Command of Christ" - Whitby 1947	86
(b) "Making the Gospel Known to Every Creature" - Bangkok 1949 .. .. .	92
(c) "The Unfinished Task" of making Christians .. .. .	97

	page
<u>Chapter Two: The Search for Concrete Expressions of Asian Christian Solidarity in Evangelism and Unity</u> .. ..	106
1. The First Attempt .. ..	106
(a) The fear of fragmentation and narrow Asian nationalism .. ..	111
(b) A limited success - Bangkok 1949 .. ..	118
2. The Unifying Conviction on Evangelistic Urgency and Unity .. ..	124
(a) The common Asian contribution to the World Ecumenical Movement .. ..	128
(b) Mission and unity - one single entity .. ..	132
3. The Second Attempt .. ..	135
(a) The "plot" of ACEM .. ..	139
(b) The formation of EACC - "A happy fulfilment" ..	144
(c) Bandung and Prapat - a distorted comparison ..	147
 SECTION III : ASIAN CHRISTIAN RESPONSE, SECOND PERIOD, 1958-1968	151
<u>Chapter One: The Recovery of the Meaning of the Church and its Selfhood</u> .. ..	159
1. The Renewal of the Ministry of the Laity and the Structures of the Local Congregation .. ..	162
(a) The integral relatedness between worship, mission and renewal .. ..	164
(b) "Structures for a Missionary Congregation" ..	169
(c) The meanings of "The Christian Community within the Human Community" .. ..	170
(d) Signs of renewal .. ..	172
2. The Renewal of the Forms of Christian Mission and Service .. ..	175
(a) New forms of Christian service - "Diakonia" ..	178
(b) Joint Action for Mission - its meaning and implications .. ..	185
(c) The debate on evangelism and social concern ..	192
3. The Renewal of the Asian Churches as "Confessing Churches" .. ..	202
(a) The debate on world confessionalism and its expressions .. ..	209
(b) Towards deeper understanding of <sup>the</sup> Asian theological and missionary Tasks - Kandy 1965, Hong Kong 1966 .. ..	221
(c) The continuing struggle against confessionalism	228
 <u>Chapter Two: Discerning the Work of Christ in the East Asian Situation</u> .. ..	235
1. In Relation to New National Foundations .. ..	238
(a) The centrality of the "personal" .. ..	242
(b) The "common humanity" of man .. ..	248
(i) The basis for Christian and non-Christian co-operation .. ..	252
(ii) Efforts towards better understanding of religions .. ..	255
(iii) The need for inter-religious dialogues and study of religions in depth ..	261
(c) In the struggles for the "personal" and "common humanity" in political structures and international relations .. ..	265
(i) / ...	

	page
(i) Asian Christian divisions in international affairs . . . . .	270
(ii) The continuing task of discernment and costly ministry of reconciliation . .	274
2. In Relation to Development . . . . .	280
(a) The spreading concern for social and economic development . . . . .	283
(b) The first Asian Christian insights on "development" . .	289
3. In Relation to the Hope for Mankind . . . . .	303
(a) The rule of Christ over all things . . . . .	304
(b) Christ the true and new humanity . . . . .	309
(c) Christ the saviour and future of all . . . . .	316
RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT . . . . .	322
APPENDICES:	
A. East Asian Christian Statistics . . . . .	334
B. Member Churches and Councils of the EACC . . . . .	335
C. The Constitution of the EACC . . . . .	337
D. Area and Population . . . . .	341
E. World Population Projections for the Year 2000 . . . . .	342
F. Final Communiqué of Asian-African Conference, Bandung, 24th April, 1955 (extracts only) . .	343
G. The Aims and Purpose of the Association of South East Asian Nations . . . . .	344
H. A List of more notable internal strifes, natural disasters, and international conflicts in East Asia since the end of the Second World War . . . . .	345
I. Gross National Product per head (US dollars) approx. for 1967 . . . . .	347
J. Indicators of development in Asia . . . . .	348
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	349

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND THANKS

In submitting this Thesis as my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, I must first of all extend my most sincere thanks to my supervisor of study, Dr. John R. Fleming, for his constant guidance. I am very grateful to him for allowing me to make use of his fine collection of books and other materials needed for this study. I am also indebted to the staff members of St. Andrews University Library and St. Mary's College Library for their service and helpfulness. A scholarship grant from the World Council of Churches (WCC) enabled me to spend about two months at the Ecumenical Institute at Celigny, and the World Council of Churches at Geneva, Switzerland, to look for other needed materials. My sincere thanks are due to those library officials of both places and officers of the various WCC departments and the Lutheran World Federation for all the help that they gave me. While I was there, I was also fortunate enough to have the opportunity of meeting a number of people including U Kyaw Than, the General Secretary of the East Asia Christian Conference (EACC); Dr. W.A. Visser't Hooft, the former General Secretary of the WCC; and Professor Hans-Ruedi Weber of the Ecumenical Institute, Celigny, and author of the book, *ASIA AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT 1895-1961*; from all of whom I gained valuable guidance for my study. I am also thankful to Mrs. Ruth K. Cadwallader, the Information Secretary of the EACC Bangkok Office for sending me latest records and publications of the EACC, and to Mr. Samuel Isaac, the director of the EACC Asian Christian Service at Vietiane, for informing me about the work of the Service in Indochina.

My wife and daughter have been with me throughout the period of my study at St. Andrews. Our financial support came from different sources: the Lee Foundation, Singapore; the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America; the Donald Baillie Fund of St. Mary's College; the Finance and Awards Committee of the University of St. Andrews; and the Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia. A number of our friends and relatives have also been very kind to us. To all these institutions and individuals, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for their encouragement, understanding and unfailing support. In addition, I should also mention the Anglican Diocese of Singapore for granting me leave to do this study.

Before coming to St. Andrews, I was an assistant lecturer at Trinity Theological College, Singapore, and Chaplain of St. Peter's Hall of the College. I obtained the degree of Bachelor of Theology from the same Trinity Theological College in 1960; and the degree of Master of Theology (S.E. Asia) in 1969 from the South East Asia Graduate School of Theology of the Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia. The latter degree was a two-year course. I completed the first year in Singapore, and the second at St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews, Scotland. In October 1969, I was admitted to St. Mary's College as a full-time research student and subsequently a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. At the completion of my present study, I shall return with my family to Singapore to start work in Trinity Theological College and in the Anglican Diocese of Singapore.

My family and I have enjoyed our stay in this beautiful



Royal Burgh of St. Andrews. We have made many friends and we are extremely thankful for their welcome, hospitality and helpfulness. In saying this, I must also include Mrs. J. Wallace of St. Andrews Secretarial Service for putting in so much effort to get this Thesis typed for me.

## A B B R E V I A T I O N S

ACEM	Asia Council on Ecumenical Mission
ACS	Asian Christian Service
ATTSSEA	Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia
CCS	Committee on Church and Society
CICAMS	Committee on Inter-Church Aid for Mission and Service
DICARWS	Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service
DICASR	Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees
DWME	Division of World Mission and Evangelism
EACC	East Asia Christian Conference
<u>ER</u>	<u>The Ecumenical Review</u>
<u>IRM</u>	<u>International Review of Mission</u>
IMC	International Missionary Council
JAM	Joint Action for Mission
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
NCC	National Council of Churches, or National Christian Council
<u>SEAJT</u>	<u>South East Asia Journal of Theology</u>
WCC	World Council of Churches
WSCF	World Student Christian Federation

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

## INTRODUCTION

---

Met here in Bangkok as members of the Christian Church from twelve countries in Asia, and conscious of our privilege in being enabled thus to meet, and of our responsibility as disciples of Jesus Christ at a moment of grave peril and great opportunity in the history of this continent, we are constrained to send this message to our fellow Christians in the countries which we represent.

We believe that it is God himself who has made it possible for us to hold this first meeting of the representatives of the churches of Eastern Asia at such a time as this. Many of our countries have in the recent past endured great suffering and distress. All have entered — or are now entering — with mingled hope and fear upon the tasks which follow a newly-won freedom. Others are in the throes of internal revolution and continuing civil war. All are conscious of new and powerful forces in the life of Asia which hold possibilities both of good and evil for the future.

Amid all the turmoil of the time, we bear witness afresh to the eternal truth of the Gospel, the truth that the world has a Lord, a Judge and a Saviour — Jesus Christ. Constrained by his love and directed by his plain command, we declare again that the Gospel is the saving truth for this as for every generation, and we urge upon the churches of Eastern Asia the duty of making the Gospel known to every creature.

(from "A Message to the Churches of Asia," issued by the Eastern Asia Christian Conference held at Bangkok, Thailand, in December 1949)<sup>1</sup>

Yet in the midst of floods and deep waters God set the rainbow in the cloud. Amidst the perils and upheavals of our times in the world in general and East Asia in particular, God has not left our lands without a promise and a sign — even the Church, the community which confesses Jesus Christ, the Lord. I do not think it is an accident that in this moment of East Asian history it had pleased God to call and bring together the parts of His Church to be the sign of His promise and to declare that being in deep waters is not the permanent lot of Humanity. Fragmentary and imperfect as it may be, the gathered community of the Lord remains the sign and the token of His promise given in Jesus to the world.

(from the address given by U Kyaw Than, then Associate Secretary of the East Asia Christian Conference, at the Inaugural Assembly of the Conference held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, in May 1959)<sup>2</sup>

- 
1. The International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, The Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia: Papers and Minutes of the Eastern Asian Christian Conference, Bangkok, December 3-11, 1949 (New York: Friendship Press, 1950), p. 120. (This report referred to henceforward as Bangkok 1949 Report.)
  2. U Kyaw Than (ed.), Witnesses Together, the official report of the Inaugural Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference held at Kuala Lumpur/.....

God created the one world; but everywhere we see fragmentation of it; Jesus Christ created the one Church as His instrument of reconciliation, but everywhere we see it divided. Yet we dare to affirm with St. Paul that "in Him all things hold together".

We can make this affirmation because Christ is present and active in this broken world and in His divided Church and He calls His followers to participation in this presence and activity.

(from the official findings of the Fourth Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference held at Bangkok in February 1968)<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

The Second World War came to its end in 1945, and with it a new chapter of the history of the world began. During the post-war years 1945-1968, East Asia has found itself very much in the forefront of this new chapter. For it was a time heavily characterised by the Asian peoples' quests for political freedom, peace, development and selfhood of their new nations; and nationalism, certainly, has been the driving force behind these quests.

Christians remain until today as small minorities in all countries of East Asia. The only exception is in the Republic of the Philippines. The total Asian Christian population was estimated in 1957 to be less than three per cent of the total population of Asia. Among this three per cent, more than half are Roman Catholics and the rest are Protestant Christians and others.<sup>2</sup> But while they are minority groups, they are also parts of the peoples and nations of East Asia. They have found

---

Lumpur, Malaya, May 14-24, 1959 (Rangoon: U Maung U BBC Board of Publications, 1959), p. 12. (This report referred to henceforward as Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report.) This address appears also in Rainbow in the Cloud, addresses given at the first assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference (henceforward referred to as EACC), Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, 1959, and published by the Joint Committee for the Australia Council for the World Council of Churches and the Missionary Council of Australia (n.d.), p. 11.

1. Bangkok '68 "In Christ All Things Hold Together": Statements and Findings of the Fourth Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference (Bangkok: EACC), p. 1. (This report referred to henceforward as Bangkok 1968 Report.)
2. See Appendix A, "East Asian Christian Statistics."

themselves, like all other East Asian peoples, in the same current of events and quests. This study is an attempt to examine the response of the East Asian Protestant Christians and churches, or "Asian Christians" as they will be generally called in this study, in relation to the quests of the peoples and nations ("Asian peoples"), in this new and vitally important chapter of the history of East Asia. The three statements quoted in the beginning of this introduction indicate the general orientation of this study.

In 1949, when Asian church leaders gathered at Bangkok for the first time after the War, the Asian continent was seen by them to be "at a moment of grave peril and great opportunity". It was a time of "great suffering and distress", "mingled hope and fear", "internal revolution and continuing civil war". In 1959, after a full decade when they gathered again at Kuala Lumpur for the official inauguration of the East Asia Christian Conference, it was still a time of "floods and deep waters", "perils and upheavals". Nearly another decade passed away before they gathered at Bangkok in 1968 for the Fourth Assembly of the EACC, and to them East Asia still remained a "broken world". But in spite of all these "grave perils", Asian Christians had also demonstrated great confidence in the love and mercy of their God for the peoples of East Asia. They claimed that if it was a time of perils, it was also a time of great opportunity for Christian mission and social witness. They reminded themselves of the urgent and primary task of making Christ known to all peoples in East Asia. The need of the time was for Christ, for His Gospel, "the saving truth for this as for every generation". To many Asian Christians, their coming together at Bangkok in 1949 followed by their resolve to be His "Witnesses Together" in the EACC in 1959 were not something accidental but indeed the "sign" and the "token" of God's promise of love, mercy and fulfilment for the Asian peoples. "Being in deep waters is not the permanent lot of Humanity." The EACC was compared with the "rainbow in the

cloud" signifying God's promise of victory and final deliverance for the Asian peoples who had been finding themselves living constantly in grave perils.

But this belief, Asian church leaders have also argued, demanded the response and participation of all Asian Christians in the total life of the peoples and nations. For "Christ is present and active in this broken world". They reminded themselves and all Asian Christians at Bangkok in 1968 that God had called them all "to participation in this presence and activity". Since the end of the War, many Asian Christians did attempt to respond to this call. The events leading to the establishment of the EACC at Prapat, Indonesia, in 1957 and the life and work of this organisation in the subsequent years are the major expressions of this Asian Christian effort. Therefore, a study of the major events and dominant emphases of thought and action in the origin and history of the EACC will reveal the nature of this Asian Christian response.

The plan of this study is divided into three main sections. The first will consist of an examination of the political, social, religious and economic situation in East Asia since the end of the Second World War. As already discernible in the three statements quoted in the beginning of this introduction, Asian Christians have always emphasised that the mission of the Church, and their confession of faith, must be directed to and implemented in the context of the actual situations prevailing in the region. For God is at work in secular events. Therefore, a knowledge of the major events and situations of East Asia from the end of the war up to about 1968 is imperative for the purposes of this study. However, this section is not intended to be a detailed history of post-war East Asia; its main purpose is to describe the important and necessary background and context for a scrutiny of the Asian Christian response. It will therefore be a study of "The Quests of East Asia 1945-1968."

The second section of this study will be an examination of the



response of Asian Christians in relation to the quests of the Asian peoples and nations during the years from 1945 to 1957. It will attempt to analyse their response in relation to communism, the international tensions created by the "cold war" between communism and anti-communism, Asian nationalism, the resurgence of Asian classical religions, and the African-Asian Conference held at Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955. It will also attempt to show that as part of this response, Asian Christians' deep conviction of the urgency and primacy of evangelism and unity of all Asian Christians had also brought into being the formation of the EACC at Prapat.

The third section will deal with the Asian Christian response during the years from 1958 to about 1968. It will attempt to demonstrate that the response of this period can best be seen in two fronts. The first has been in the Asian churches themselves. It will be about their gradual recovery of the meaning and implications of being the church in East Asia having its own selfhood in the universal Church. The issues to be examined here will be the call to renewal of the ministry of the laity and local congregations, the forms of Christian mission and service, and relationships between churches in the total task of mission and in the efforts toward establishing and expressing the true selfhood of the churches of East Asia. The second front has been in the task of discerning God at work in the East Asian situation. It will be an examination of the EACC's discernment and participation in three main areas of the Asian quest: (i) in relation to new national foundations, (ii) in relation to development, and (iii) in relation to the hope for mankind. The concluding chapter will then be a retrospect and prospect: it will be a summing up of the observations, appreciations and criticisms made previously in the study in the light of the current development of events in East Asia. It will attempt to evaluate Asian Christians' and the EACC's development of thought and action as an Asian



Christian response of obedient faith in relation to the quests of East Asia.

It should be made clear that this study is not intended to be a history of the ecumenical movement in East Asia, nor of the EACC. However, the "Asian Christians" referred to in this study are obviously those in the ecumenical movement and members of the member-churches of the EACC. "The quests of East Asia" have been the "frontiers" of the Asian churches. The intention of this study is to demonstrate that the Asian churches have gone to these "frontiers"; and in doing so they have discovered anew their mission, identity and selfhood in East Asia. For "ecumenicity" may be defined in terms of "the existing ecclesiastical institutions ... being called in question by the frontier on which they find themselves, and rediscovering themselves through repentance and new life ... they rediscover each other as members of the Body of Christ. It is the operation of this process which needs to be explored."<sup>1</sup>

Asian Christians brought the EACC into being in 1957, and they have stayed in it as His witnesses together to East Asia. Therefore, the materials and resources used in this study, particularly in Section III, will be mainly those issued or published by the EACC. The Asian peoples are not one people. They are of different languages, races, and cultural religious backgrounds. Asian Christians are not unaffected by these diversities. But in spite of them, Asian church leaders have claimed that they could still speak together with a common voice. D.T. Niles, General Secretary of the EACC, said, "Ecumenical reports are pointers."<sup>2</sup> J.R. Fleming, then secretary of the EACC Committee on the Life, Message

- 
1. By Charles West, in a file of documents and other materials on Asia and the Ecumenical Movement gathered by Professor Hans-Ruedi Weber and kept in the archives of the Ecumenical Institute at Celigny, Switzerland.
  2. J.R. Fleming (ed.), One People One Mission: The Situation Conferences of the East Asia Christian Conference, 1963 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 103. (This report referred to henceforward as Situation Conferences Report.) D.T. Niles died in June 1970.

and Unity of the Church, spoke about the findings of the Situation Conferences convened by the EACC in three different areas in East Asia in the words, "This is the 'raw stuff' of Christian theology in Asia."<sup>1</sup> D.G. Moses, then chairman of the EACC, spoke of the reports of the EACC's first consultation on Faith and Order held in Hong Kong in 1966 as "part of a whole complex of thought with which the EACC has concerned itself during the last 10 years".<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the dominant emphases and major areas of concern discernible in the statements, documents, programmes and actions of the EACC and in the addresses and writings of its leaders can be taken as pointing to the ideas and beliefs which were either common among its member-churches or were considered by outstanding Asian church leaders as most important for the life of the churches in the region. Even if certain emphases might not be claimed by the EACC as representing an agreed consensus of its member-churches, it can still be regarded as representing major trends of Asian Christian thought. Indeed, in Niles' understanding, one of the major functions of the EACC was "to inject into situations ideas which we felt were right at this time, to get key individuals in every country committed to these ideas, and then to put pressure behind these ideas so as to make costly any attempt to disregard them".<sup>3</sup> The views expressed by certain foreign missionaries and church leaders such as J.W. Decker, Charles W. Ranson, John A. Mackay, Stanley Smith, Stephen Neill, Lesslie Newbigin, W.A. Visser't Hooft and John R. Fleming will be referred to in this study. These people were either serving in East Asia then or had been in the region before and were keeping close contact with it over

- 
1. Situation Conferences Report, p. 4.
  2. Confessing the Faith in Asia Today, statement issued by the Consultation convened by the East Asia Christian Conference and held in Hong Kong, October 26-November 3, 1966 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 6. (This report referred to henceforward as Faith and Order 1966 Report.)
  3. D.T. Niles, Ideas and Services: A Report of the East Asia Christian Conference 1957-1967 (Christchurch: New Zealand NCC), p. 28.

many years. They had their influence not only upon their home churches or upon the ecumenical organisations or mission agencies from which they came, but also upon a large section of the Christian communities in East Asia by virtue of their years of service and love for the Asian churches and peoples. In a sense, they could be regarded as "Asian Christians".

There are three main reasons which have made this study necessary and urgent. Firstly, the EACC has existed for nearly fifteen years. Its life and work seems to be taken for granted and no closer scrutiny has been attempted so far for the benefit of Christians and churches in East Asia. Its membership has been steadily increasing in recent years, and it has assumed an increasingly important and representative role in the area and in the wider world ecumenical movement.<sup>1</sup> An examination of its dominant emphases, concerns and actions might lead to a better appreciation of its existence for the Asian churches. Secondly, the membership of the EACC until now has consisted of non-Roman Catholic Christian churches only. The Roman Catholic churches, which form more than half of the total Christian population in East Asia, are not members. Even among Protestant Christians and others, there is now a growing influence of world conservative evangelicalism coming into the region. Since the Asia-South Pacific Congress on Evangelism which was held in Singapore in 1968 under the auspices of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in the United States of America, the so-called "Conservative Evangelicals" in East Asia are gradually being drawn together into a separate organisation of their own alongside the EACC.<sup>2</sup> It is hoped, therefore, that this

---

1. See Appendix B, "Member-Churches and Councils of the EACC at 1964." The general membership of 44 church bodies in 1959 has (1971) increased to 79 churches and councils. Practically all major non-Roman Catholic churches and Christian bodies in the region have joined the organisation (see Asia Focus, a quarterly magazine published by the East Asia Christian Conference (Bangkok: EACC), Vol. VI, 1st and 2nd Quarter 1971, p. 151).

2. Peter Leung, The Evangelical Resurgence after the Second World War and / .....

study may be able to contribute in some measure to a better mutual understanding among the different Christian forces in East Asia, who must all be deeply concerned about the mission and unity of the Church in East Asia. Thirdly, the development of political, social, economic and religious events in East Asia must be the keen concern of many people in the world today. Since the end of the Second World War the emergence of new Asian nations, the many international conflicts in the region, the re-emergence of Japan as a great industrial power and the gradual surfacing of the People's Republic of China as the third world power alongside the U.S.A. and Soviet Russia have all led to a widely accepted world opinion that the peace and progress of mankind in coming years may well be decided in Asia. East Asia is the continent in which the East and the West have been continuously reacting and responding to each other. Various forces have been at work in the continent, and they can prove to be either creative or destructive to mankind. Hendrik Kraemer warned, "Humanly speaking, their largely creative or destructive or mixed effect will mainly depend on the wisdom, understanding or folly of the Western white world in handling the situation ... TOGETHER WITH Asia and Africa, not for and on behalf of them but WITH them." "The Western world," he believed, "is simply faced with the outcome of its own handiwork ... — the stormy penetration of the West."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, all Asian peoples themselves must be alert to the events which are leading to this decisive hour in human history. As for Christians in East Asia, who have a belief in God and history, they too must want to discern what they can contribute in the handling of this situation.

---

and its Relation with the Modern Ecumenical Movement, unpublished M.Theol. (S.E. Asia) thesis, 1969, South East Asia Graduate School of Theology, Singapore. This is a detailed study of the decline and resurgence of the Conservative Evangelicals in Great Britain and the U.S.A., and their spreading influence to other parts of the world. It describes their present belief in the infallibility and supreme authority of the Bible, the strong emphasis on the priority of evangelism over Christian social concern, the spiritual unity of all Christians, their conflict with the ecumenical movement and their strategy of non-participation, isolation and infiltration in their relationship with it.

1. Hendrik Kraemer, World Culture and World Religion: The Coming Dialogue (London: Lutterworth Press, 1960), p. 275.

---

S E C T I O N      I

---

SECTION I  
THE QUESTS OF EAST ASIA 1945-1968

---

"East Asia" is generally taken as referring to those large southern and eastern parts of the Asian continent and its adjacent islands stretching from West Pakistan in the west to Japan in the east and from China in the north to Indonesia in the south. It occupies 13 per cent of the world's land area, yet it contains more than half of the world's total population.<sup>1</sup> Geographically, East Asia may be subdivided into three broad regions: (i) South Asia — Pakistan, India and Ceylon, (ii) South East Asia — Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, North and South Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines, and (iii) North East Asia — China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, North and South Korea and Japan.<sup>2</sup> The peoples of East Asia are disparate in racial background, religion and customs. Caucasoid, Mongoloid and Negroid are the principal racial strains in the region, but the intermixture has been great in many districts and new sub-types have been evolved in consequence. Thus, while the peoples in this continent are all known as Asians, in fact there is a great diversity of races not only between region and region but also as a result of migrations down through the centuries, in many individual Asian countries.<sup>3</sup> East Asia is also the home of many classical religions and philosophies.<sup>4</sup> Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism have for ages moulded

---

1. See Appendix D, "Area and Population."

2. W. Stanley Rycroft and Myrtle M. Clemmer, A Factual Study of Asia (New York, N.Y.: Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1963), pp. 1-8, 18; also E. Stuart Kirby, Economic Development in East Asia (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967), pp. 32-33.

3. Rycroft and Clemmer, op. cit., pp. 8-10.

4. Ibid., pp. 146-148; also Jean Herbert, An Introduction to Asia, trans. Manu Banerji (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965), pp. 29-36.



the cultural and social thought-forms and institutions of the lives of the peoples of China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Indo-China. Islam has done the same in Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan, and the same story is true of Hinduism in India, Buddhism in Ceylon, and Roman Catholicism in the Philippines — "the Christian nation of the East".<sup>1</sup> The distinctive feature of East Asia, then, is the diversity of its peoples, religions and cultures. While the Chinese, Indians, Indonesians, or Filipinos are all known to the West as Asians, they in fact differ from each other in their attitudes to and understanding of life, human values, social relationships, economics, environment, God or gods. In his fine study about religions, cultures and traditions in Asia, Jean Herbert discovers that he can only bring out "some general features" such as the common religious and spiritual foundation of traditional Asian life. There are "many Asias".<sup>2</sup> This great diversity is further deepened by the multiplicity of languages and dialects spoken by the various races and tribes. For example, in India before its independence there were at least 179 official languages and 544 dialects.<sup>3</sup> Or in Singapore, with a population of about two millions, there are four official languages and one national language, plus some other unofficial languages and many other dialects. Indeed, the Asian peoples "speak with a thousand tongues".<sup>4</sup>

But in spite of all these diversities, East Asia can still be referred to as one entity. This is possible for two main reasons: firstly, "Western dominance" in East Asia, and secondly, Asian nationalism. "Western dominance" in East Asia, as K.M. Panikkar has shown, began after Vasco da Gama landed at Calicut on the south-west coast of India in

---

1. Stephen Neill, The Cross Over Asia (London: The Canterbury Press, 1948), p. 33.

2. J. Herbert, Introduction to Asia, pp. 25, 29, 375.

3. Rycroft and Clemmer, Factual Study of Asia, p. 9.

4. Gerald H. Anderson (ed.), Christ and Crisis in Southeast Asia (New York: Friendship Press, 1968), p. 10.

1498.<sup>1</sup> For more than four hundred and fifty years after this the East Asian peoples were under either direct Western colonial rule or Western political and economic domination and exploitation. Asian nationalism began to develop at about the end of the First World War; however, it has only been since the Second World War that it has become the most powerful force behind the Asian peoples' struggle to be free from this "Western dominance". Since the end of the Second World War there have been three main quests among all the peoples in East Asia. These have been (i) the quest for freedom and independence, (ii) the quest for economic development, and (iii) the quest for nationhood or "national selfhood". The three main focuses of endeavour, with all their "grave perils and great opportunities", have undoubtedly created a deep sense of common task and common destiny among the East Asian peoples despite their diversities. They have radically affected the lives of the Asian peoples and nations, and it is therefore right that these three great quests should be examined more closely here.

### 1. The Quest for Freedom and Independence

The Second World War came to its end after two atomic bombs were dropped in Japan. The Japanese peoples witnessed the immense destruction caused by these bombs. They accepted the unconditional surrender demanded by the Allied Forces. Their militaristic and feudal government was replaced. The new government vowed not to wage any more war, and the Japanese people were urged to get on with the gigantic task of rebuilding

---

1. For Western dominance in Asia, see K.M. Panikkar's book Asia and Western Dominance — A Survey of the Vasco da Gama Epoch of Asian History 1498-1945 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1953). Panikkar examined this history under three stages: (1) the age of expansion, 1498-1750, (2) the age of conquest, 1750-1858, and (3) the age of empire, 1858-1914. "Europe in Retreat" began in 1918, from about the end of the First World War.



their nation. Their determination and hard work over the past twenty-five years have now not only successfully rebuilt a free and independent new nation, but have also turned Japan into the third largest industrial and economic power in the world today. It has become the only "developed" and "rich" country in the whole of East Asia.

But the end of the Second World War did not bring immediate peace to the peoples of China. The conflict between the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party, which had been put aside during the war at least temporarily for the sake of a united front against the Japanese aggressors, resumed soon after the end of the war. The corruption and inefficiency of the Nationalist Government hastened the complete victory of the communists, and by 1949 the whole of mainland China had submitted to communist rule. In October of the same year a new government, that of the People's Republic of China, was proclaimed in Peking. President Chiang Kai-Shek, the leader of the Nationalist Government, retreated with the remains of his defeated army and supporters to the island of Taiwan. Since 1949, Chiang and his government have repeatedly vowed to reoccupy the mainland and have claimed to be still the lawfully elected government for the whole of China. Similarly, the communist regime in Peking has repeatedly threatened to liberate Taiwan. But as the history of this Chinese internal conflict has dragged on into the nineteen-seventies, what has become more realistic and important to the outside world is the fact that the communists have apparently moulded successfully a new and united China which is now reckoned by many nations as one of the big world powers of the present day. But the Second World War and the communist success in China also led to two major political developments in East Asia. These were, firstly, the emergence of new Asian nations and, secondly, the fear of world communism.

(a) / ...

(a) The emergence of new nations

The ambition behind the Japanese war efforts in Asia was "Pan-Asianism".<sup>1</sup> Japan wanted to become the leader of her own grand design — the Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere in Asia. The design was based on the belief that when the Asian peoples were freed from Western dominance they could then be induced to accept Japanese leadership in Asia. Some Asian nationalists did co-operate for a time with the Japanese.<sup>2</sup> But the real face of Japan soon revealed itself in her territorial ambitions and the arrogance and brutality of her army; the hollow design of an Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere ended with her defeat in 1945, and with it too went the idea of Pan-Asianism. But the Japanese War strengthened the Asian peoples' struggles for freedom and independence from the Western colonial powers in East Asia. They could see for themselves that Western powers in East Asia could not, at least for the time being, resist the power of one single Asian nation — Japan. "The Japanese set the spark to the powder-keg. They had come as conquerors, but they were Asians, not Europeans. ... The coming of the Japanese ... demonstrated two things: that the Europeans were not invincible and that the local people could rule themselves. ... Things could never be the same again."<sup>3</sup>

Some observers, such as Bishop Stephen Neill, would go even further back to the defeat of the Russians by the Japanese in 1905 as the beginning of this collapse of "the bluff of the West".<sup>4</sup> After that, Neill holds, the Western powers "fatally and finally destroyed their own prestige through the first world war. ... What rags of it were left were torn

---

1. C.P. Fitzgerald, "Pan-Asianism" in Asia, A Handbook, ed. Guy Wint (London: Anthony Blond Ltd., 1965), p. 402.

2. Ibid.

3. Brian Crozier, Southeast Asia in Turmoil (Penguin Books, revised edn. 1968), p. 15.

4. Stephen Neill, Christian Partnership (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1952), p. 22.

away by the Second World War."<sup>1</sup> In similar vein, the might of the Chinese and North Korean armies in the Korean War in 1950-1953 and the defeat of the French army at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 demonstrated again to the Asian peoples that Western powers were not invincible. So it was that, from the end of the war, Western political dominance began to collapse under the great pressure from Asian nationalism, soon to become the most powerful force at work in East Asia. Its immediate objective was to win freedom and independence by driving away the Western colonial powers from the region. So, for example, "the years 1947-1948 have been years of deliverance,"<sup>2</sup> for during these two years the peoples of the whole Indian sub-continent won their freedom from Great Britain. The new nations of India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma came into being. The road to this freedom differed from country to country. In Indochina and Indonesia the French and the Dutch would only leave after much violence with the nationalists. On the other hand the Philippines, the Indian sub-continent, Malaya and Singapore achieved this objective by many years of hard negotiations. One way or another, the fact is that within the space of little more than a decade nearly 600 million people in South and South East Asia were freed from colonial rule.<sup>3</sup> New nations appeared in many parts of the Asian continent who all had great pride in their newly-won freedom and were very confident in their ability to govern themselves. In spite of many economic and social problems in the new nations, there was "the sense of progress and self-fulfilment".<sup>4</sup>

But, alas, it was not long before these new nations began to discover

---

1. S. Neill, Christian Partnership, p. 22.

2. Stephen Neill, "The Asian Scene," Ecumenical Review I, no. 1 (Autumn 1948: Geneva, World Council of Churches), p. 65.

3. Year of independence:- The Philippines, 1946; India, 1947; Pakistan, 1947; Ceylon, 1948; Burma, 1948; N. and S. Korea, 1948; Indonesia, 1949; Cambodia, 1953; Laos, 1953; N. and S. Vietnam, 1955; Malaya, 1957; Malaysia, 1963; Singapore, 1965.

4. S. Neill, "The Asian Scene," p. 66.

that their newly-won freedom was in a very precarious situation, for they found themselves poised in the centre of the growing international conflict between communism and anti-communism in the world.

(b) The Cold War

Communists in East Asia, like the nationalists, also claimed to fight for social justice, freedom and independence for the people. But they differed from the nationalists on ideology and longterm objectives. The nationalists, as will be seen later in this chapter, have been more pragmatic in regard to ideology. Their main objective has been the building of an independent and prosperous nation having its own identity and selfhood in the international community of world nations. But the communists have a different ideology — Marxism (or Marxist-Leninism) — in their struggles for power. Chairman Mao Tze Tung of the People's Republic of China has declared that communists are "internationalists". They must oppose "narrow nationalism and narrow patriotism". Their objective, he has commanded, is to liberate all peoples and nations and to unite them in the final and inevitable triumph of communism in the world.<sup>1</sup> Such an objective inevitably came into conflict not only with non-communist Western powers but also with the nationalists in Asia.

Communist insurrections were reported in many Asian countries soon after the war. Apart from China, communists were struggling for power in Indochina, India, Malaya, Singapore, the Philippines, Burma and Indonesia. The Chinese communists' complete victory in China, their alignment with Soviet Russia and their military intervention in the Korean War undoubtedly further strengthened other Asian communists' struggles. Their insurrection in the Malayan Peninsula turned into an open jungle

---

1. Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967). See pp. 23-44 on "Socialism and Communism", and pp. 175-180 on "Patriotism and Internationalism".

warfare with thousands of British Commonwealth and Malayan troops involved. It took about eight years and heavy loss of lives on both sides before the communists could be driven back to the deep jungles of the north bordering Thailand.<sup>1</sup> But in Indochina the communists scored victory: the French army suffered humiliating defeat at Dien Bien Phu; Vietnam had to be divided into two parts; the communists gained sovereignty in North Vietnam. All these events inevitably caused great fear of communist dominance in the rest of Asia, communist organisations and activities in many Asian countries being either completely banned or persecuted by the colonial or nationalist governments in power.<sup>2</sup>

But this fear of communist dominance was also seen in Europe. There, Russia had successfully consolidated her dominance over the Eastern European states and was aiding other communist forces in other parts of Europe and in the Middle East in their struggles for control of their countries. Thus, it was this growing power of communism in Asia and in Europe which ushered in the era of America's anti-communist policy of "containment". The Truman Doctrine (which was designed primarily for Europe), that "it must be the policy of the United States to support free people who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure", was applied in the Korean War. America and her allies sent in troops and an anti-communist war was fought in Korea. And very soon John Foster Dulles, then America's Secretary of State,

... created a vast network to contain Communism, and by the end of the decade, the United States had security treaties of varying scope with 42 nations. These commitments were in the nature of a crusade. For/ ...

- 
1. Derrick Sington, "Malaysia" in Asia, A Handbook, ed. Guy Wint, p. 257.
  2. For more details about these events, see (i) B. Crozier, Southeast Asia in Turmoil (this book contains details from 1945 to about 1968); (ii) Crozier's article "South-East Asia" in The Cold War, ed. Evan Luard (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964), pp. 163-190, and in the same book Geoffrey Hudson's "The Rise of Communist Power in the Far East"; and (iii) Richard Harris, "Communism in Asia" in Asia, A Handbook, pp. 419-28.



For as most Americans then saw it, Communism was a malevolent, monolithic force bent on world domination, and it was the messianic mission of the United States to thwart that design anywhere and everywhere.<sup>1</sup>

Such anti-communist foreign policy adopted by the strongest and richest nation on earth led many nations of the world to divide into two opposing ideological power blocs: anti-communist or communist, the West or the East, Washington or Moscow. Neutrality for the small and new nations was almost impossible. Unable to protect themselves with their inconsiderable military power and dependent on foreign economic aid, most of the nations in East Asia had little choice but to align themselves with one bloc or the other. The "Cold War" was on.<sup>2</sup> The Third World War, to be waged with nuclear weapons, was thought of by many as imminent. The newly-won freedom of the Asian nations, or indeed their very survival, was at stake.

But as international tension built up, it was also dawning upon the understanding of many peoples and governments in Asia and Africa that such control and manipulation of big powers over the newly-achieved freedom and destiny of the small and new nations were in fact nothing but neo-colonialism or neo-imperialism.<sup>3</sup> Asian nationalism, therefore, took on a new task of defending freedom and peace in East Asia. Its major accomplishment was the ~~African-Asian~~ Asian Conference held at Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955.

- 
1. "In Search of a Foreign Policy," feature article, Time Magazine (New York: Rockefeller Center), Dec. 14, 1970. In East Asia, the well-known treaty has been the Manila Pact, signed by Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States on September 8, 1954, "for collective action to resist armed attacks and to counter subversion aimed at the overthrow of their governments. The Pact is officially known as the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty. The agency established by the member governments to implement the aims and objectives set forth in the pact is the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO)" (from Manila Pact and Pacific Charter (Bangkok: Public Information Office, SEATO HQ, P.O. Box 517, undated), behind cover page).
  2. E. Luard (ed.), The Cold War. This book is a very informative and careful study about this tension between Russia and America and how other nations in other parts of the world became involved in it.
  3. Ibid., p. 183.

(c) Bandung Conference — the defence of freedom and Asian solidarity

The Bandung Conference was convened by five new Asian nations — Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia and Pakistan. Twenty-four other Asian and African nations participated. Communist China was also present as a peace-maker, for she had signed a declaration of peaceful co-existence with India only a year earlier. No Western power was present; indeed, none was invited.<sup>1</sup> As expected, colonialism was strongly condemned at the Conference. Great concern was expressed about the existing international tension and the risk of a third world war. The Conference wanted prohibition of all nuclear weapons. It declared universal disarmament to be "an absolute necessity to the preservation of peace". It affirmed that "all nations should have the right freely to choose their own political and economic systems and their own way of life in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations". Its belief was that nations of different ideologies could co-exist in peace and tolerance. The principle of peaceful co-existence was regarded as the way to world peace and the common prosperity and well-being of all nations.

The Conference did not bring into being the much-speculated-upon third-world power bloc of non-aligned Asian and African nations with narrow racial political interests in opposition to the Western powers. It did, however, undeniably demonstrate a strong desire for Asian solidarity and co-operation in facing certain serious political and economic problems in Asia and in the world, and therefore, apart from the problem of international tension, it also touched on the vexed question of international trade facing all Asian and African nations. It recognised the vital need for stabilising the international prices of and demand for primary commodities which were earning a large share of national incomes for most of these nations. It recommended diversification of their export trade and it

---

1. See Appendix F for names of participating countries.

urged closer regional economic and cultural co-operation. As will be seen later in this study, these recommendations resolved at Bandung have since become major political and economic issues confronting all nations in East Asia and, on the wider front, in the United Nations. Thus the Bandung Conference cannot be regarded, as some critics have done, as a mere expression of anti-West Asian nationalism or the kind of "Pan-Asianism" advocated by Japan in the Second World War. The Conference cannot be judged solely on the basis of the fiery and anti-West speech given by Sukarno, then prime minister of Indonesia.<sup>1</sup> The communiqué issued by the Conference needs to be examined,<sup>2</sup> for it is only in the light of it that the Conference's desire for Asian solidarity and co-operation can be seen as growing out of a deep concern for world peace, freedom and independence, for the common prosperity and progress of all nations. It was Asian nationalism at work, <sup>5</sup>but it was not a narrow or racial nationalism. Indeed, the more immediate achievement of the Conference was the much-needed easing of international tension. The big powers had to begin to take note of the serious desire for independence and freedom among the Asian and African nations. The ideological division forced upon these nations began to lose its meaning and importance. Therefore, the Cold War which had been sustained mainly by opposing ideological beliefs was gradually coming to an end; or at least, was having to be changed in character and content.<sup>3</sup> The communist insurrections in various countries were either suppressed by force or were for the moment gradually subsiding. Thus, the new Asian nations gained a breathing-space to take up again their

---

1. See for example C.P. Fitzgerald, "Pan-Asianism," pp. 402-403.

2. The whole communiqué is quoted in Wint's edited volume Asia, A Handbook, pp. 798-802. For section on "Declaration on the Promotion of World Peace and Co-operation", see Appendix F below.

3. See (i) W.A.C. Adie, "China's Algebra of Revolution" in Asia, A Handbook, pp. 437-442; (ii) L.S. Stavrianos, The World Since 1500: A Global History (N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1966), pp. 525 ff.; (iii) Introduction to E. Luard (ed.), The Cold War, pp. 11-15.



immense tasks of economic development and the establishment of their selfhood or national identity.

## 2. The Quest for Economic Development

Poverty has been a major problem common to most East Asian nations. If there are "many Asias" in the Asian continent, they are "unified by poverty".<sup>1</sup> At the end of the Second World War, the standard of living was appallingly low. E.S. Kirby has observed, "Not merely each country but every district and locality had to fall back on the simplest and most dire self-sufficiency."<sup>2</sup> "Post-war East Asia was in extreme distress, penury and dislocation." Therefore, any economic development programme that can now be seen in the region really "started in large part from zero levels, at a time of abnormal difficulties".<sup>3</sup> The task of economic development then was "staggering", E. de Vries, another economist, observed.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, by the mid-nineteen-fifties when nearly all Asian peoples had won their independence and international tension had begun to ease for a time after the Bandung Conference, the new Asian governments were prepared to tackle this common task. The belief was that with economic development, poverty could be eradicated and a better life would then come to all the people. But as East Asia came into the nineteen-sixties it became clear to the Asian nations that while they had achieved economic growth their standard of living had remained very much on the same level. In fact, in

---

1. The Times (London), Aug. 17, 1970.

2. E.S. Kirby, Economic Development in East Asia, p. 26.

3. Ibid., p. 27.

4. The Study Department of the World Council of Churches, Christ -- the Hope of Asia: Ecumenical Study Conference for East Asia, Lucknow, India, December 27-30, 1952 (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1953), p. 56. (This report referred to henceforward as Lucknow 1952 Report.)

some countries the standard appeared to be actually going down. As late as 1967, apart from Japan, all East Asian nations remained on the list of low income-per-head countries of the world. Most of the Asian peoples have continued to live in poverty.<sup>1</sup> The gap between the world's rich and poor countries has widened. It is now greatly feared that if this widening gap is allowed to continue, international relations will be in great jeopardy.<sup>2</sup> However, two main problems have now been detected as contributing to the persistence of poverty and under-development in East Asia and in the so-called "developing countries" of the world. These two problems, which need urgent solutions, are (i) rapid population growth and (ii) injustice in international trade.

(a) The problem of rapid population growth

The Commission on International Development set up by the World Bank in 1968, and generally referred to as the Pearson Commission, confirms that developing countries did achieve economic growth. During the years 1950 to 1967, they increased their GDP (Gross Domestic Product) by an annual average rate of 4.8 per cent.<sup>3</sup> This is an impressive achievement on paper, being considerably faster than the growth-rates estimated

- 
1. Dudley Seers and Leonard Joy (eds.), Development in a Divided World (Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 67-69. See also Appendices I and J below.
  2. Ibid., pp. 7-23; also Robert Theobald, The Rich and the Poor: A Study of the Economics of Rising Expectations (New York: The New American Library, A Mentor Book, 1960), Part One; and Partnership in Development: Report of the Commission on International Development (London: Pall Mall Press, 1969), pp. 7 ff. This Commission, which is generally referred to as the Pearson Commission, was set up by the World Bank in 1968 for a study of the past and the future of international co-operation for economic development. Its chairman was the Right Honourable L.B. Pearson, formerly prime minister of Canada. (This report referred to henceforward as Pearson Report.)
  3. Ibid., p. 27: "Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measures the value of all the goods and services produced within the country during a year. Gross National Product (GNP) equals Gross Domestic Product minus net income payments abroad such as income on foreign investment."

for the now industrialised nations in the early stages of their economic development. But sadly, the accelerating rate of population growth over the same period held down the rate of growth of incomes per head to an average of only 2.0-2.5 per cent per year.<sup>1</sup> This means that much of the Asian nations' economic earnings have been used to feed the increasing population. Little has been left for reserve or capital investment. Nor, indeed, would an economic growth at the rate of about 4.8 per cent have added much to the wealth of the people of a basically poor country.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, while East Asian countries have been able to raise their overall agricultural production, rapid population growth has again resulted in no increase in per capita terms.<sup>3</sup> These facts show that if the living standard of the Asian people can be raised at all, the economic growth rate must not be allowed to be overtaken by that of population. In recent years, Asian nations have been constantly reminded of the urgency of finding ways of relieving this serious strain imposed on their economy by rapid population growth. The two main solutions that have been recommended are population growth control and agricultural development.

(i) The imperative of population growth control

In the early nineteen-fifties, the question of whether and in what sense the under-developed countries were faced with a problem of excessive population growth was still a subject of controversy. In fact, many economists were confident that this problem could be solved by industrialisation. Industrialisation, they argued, would create many employment

---

1. Pearson Report, pp. 27-28.

2. Eric Jay, Twenty Questions on World Development (London: Christian Aid, 1970), Question 4. For example, Jay explains, "between 1960 and 1967 India's rate of growth was slightly higher than Britain's, but in India the average income per person increased by only £7 (from £25 to £32 a year), while in Britain it increased by £120 (from £430 to £550 a year)."

3. Rycroft and Clemmer, Factual Study of Asia, pp. 68-69.

opportunities and would produce enough goods for the consumption of the population as well as for export earnings. Indeed, some even argued that population growth was necessary in order to provide sufficient manpower for rapid industrial development.<sup>1</sup> But such hopes have proved to be utopian. As will be described later, industrial growth in East Asia has been much hampered by injustices in the international trading systems. Industrial programmes, with the exception of those of Japan, have not been expanding at a satisfactory rate and it has not therefore been possible, according to the renowned economist, Gunnar Myrdal, to rely upon them as the main source of employment and national earnings.<sup>2</sup> Further, population in many Asian countries has been growing at a much faster rate than had been estimated by many governments. The whole problem, some economists have argued, has in fact not been given serious attention by many Asian governments.<sup>3</sup> The Pearson Commission has now strongly urged that "developing countries should ... recognize the relevance of population growth to their social and economic planning, and adopt appropriate

- 
1. Department of Social Affairs, The Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends: A Summary of the Findings on the Relationship between Population Changes and Economic and Social Conditions (New York: United Nations, 1953), p. 264.
  2. Gunnar Myrdal, The Challenge of World Poverty: A World Anti-Poverty Programme in Outline (Penguin Books, 1970), p. 104. Myrdal himself explains that this book is a continuation of as well as a guide to his earlier 3-volume work, Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1968). Asian Drama is about the situations and facts, while the smaller book contains Myrdal's "policies" recommended to the developing and developed countries.
  3. E.S. Kirby, Economic Development in East Asia, pp. 36-37. Cf. also Pearson Report, p. 55: "As late as 1951, a U.N. projection assumed that between 1950 and 1980 the population of Africa and Asia would grow at an annual rate of 0.7-1.3 per cent. The remarkable and largely unexpected success in reducing mortality brought a sharp change. The rate of population growth in developing countries increased steadily in the 1950's. By the mid 1960's, it settled down at an average level of 2.5 per cent." The Pearson Commission argues that India, until 1964-1965, paid only "marginal interest" to the population problem (*ibid.*, p. 293). Myrdal claims that in all the first three Five-Year Plans, India had under-estimated the population growth (The Challenge of World Poverty, pp. 148-149).

programs".<sup>1</sup>

But such an appeal is received by Asian governments and peoples with mixed feelings. While family planning has now been accepted in principle as a government policy in many countries, the actual support given by each government has varied. From Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore, for example, active support has come.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, the prime minister of Singapore, has accepted it not only for the sake of economic growth but also for improving the human quality of the nation.<sup>3</sup> But in other countries the reception has been less clear, due to the existence of religious and political sanctions which militate against the vigorous pursuit of this idea. As both Myrdal and Kirby also note, Asian religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam may even see the practice of birth control as "sinful".<sup>4</sup> Family planning has also been accused of being a "latest manifestation of colonialism", "a form of genocide".<sup>5</sup> But above all, in East Asia "it is very difficult or even impossible to influence people's behaviour in so private a sphere as their sexual behaviour, particularly when they are poor, illiterate and tradition-bound".<sup>6</sup>

Thus, even if some countries have made some serious efforts in this direction, the region as a whole has shown little decline in the rate of

---

1. Pearson Report, p. 206.

2. Ibid., pp. 56-57; E.S. Kirby, Economic Development in E. Asia, p. 40.

3. "Population: Growth and Quality," The Mirror: A Weekly Almanac of Current Affairs (Singapore: Ministry of Culture), Vol. 6, no. 1, January 5, 1970.

4. E.S. Kirby, loc. cit.; G. Myrdal, Challenge of World Poverty, p. 160.

5. The Observer (London), March 28, 1971: "Overseas aid or Neo-colonialism?" by Ben Whitaker, a former junior minister at Overseas Development Department of the British Labour Government. Whitaker quoted Dr. Han Suyin of Singapore for making this remark. Han is a well-known journalist and novelist in East Asia. See also G. Myrdal, op. cit., p. 167.

6. Ibid., pp. 161-162. Myrdal claims that "the failure of India's family planning policy during the first three five-year plans to have any appreciable effect easily leads to that conclusion".



population growth.<sup>1</sup> It is estimated that the total population of East Asia will have doubled by about the end of this century.<sup>2</sup> The Asian nations must prepare to face this serious problem, or they may find themselves forever living in poverty. The United Nations, the World Bank, and other international agencies are continuing their studies and programmes and have repeatedly urged all nations to take serious measures to curb their population growth.<sup>3</sup>

(ii) The importance of agricultural development

Agricultural development is now recovering the attention of economists and governments as another solution to the problem of poverty.<sup>4</sup> In the past, developing countries "favoured industry while neglecting agriculture".<sup>5</sup>

The bulk of Asian populations are still engaged in agriculture. It was estimated in the early nineteen-sixties that in some countries ninety per cent of the population was dependent upon agriculture as their major or sole source of income. In no country was the percentage less than fifty.<sup>6</sup> The United Nations Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East recommended in its 1961 report that while agriculture continued to absorb a major proportion of the work force in Asia, "this does not mean that agriculture in any of the underdeveloped countries of the region has come anywhere near the maximum physical or economic potentials. ... There is scope for considerable expansion of productivity given better incentives,

---

1. G. Myrdal, Challenge of World Poverty, p. 147; E.S. Kirby, Economic Development in E. Asia, pp. 38-40.

2. See Appendix E.

3. Yearbook of the United Nations 1967 (New York: United Nations, 1969), pp. 439-443; Pearson Report, pp. 194-207; G. Myrdal, op. cit., p. 169.

4. Ibid., pp. 105-106.

5. E.S. Kirby, op. cit., p. 240; Pearson Report, pp. 29, 63, 235; Seers and Joy, Development in a Divided World, p. 174.

6. Rycroft and Clemmer, Factual Study of Asia, p. 66.



the adoption of improved techniques, reorganisation of inputs, and more capital."<sup>1</sup> But in spite of this heavy dependence on agriculture, industrial investments and public development expenditures in many Asian countries have gone mainly to the cities.<sup>2</sup> The agricultural and rural sectors have been much neglected. Thus, many economists now hold that agricultural development must be seriously reconsidered, not only in order to feed the increasing population but also for stimulating other industrial growth and increasing trade. In its 1967 report, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) regarded the failure of expansion in agricultural output as "a major factor limiting the increase in the GDP of the developing countries".<sup>3</sup> "Rapid economic progress in many of the poorest countries," the Pearson Commission argues, "was doomed by very slow growth of the huge agricultural sector."<sup>4</sup>

Fortunately, the "green revolution" now signals a major breakthrough in food production.<sup>5</sup> Agricultural research has produced some high-yielding seeds which have increased production in some Asian countries since 1968. But the "revolution" also brings along with it "an array of new problems". For example:

Continued heavy expenditure on agricultural research ... as one seed variety is likely to last only for a few years ... Moreover, accelerated agricultural extension and massive investments ... are needed. Increasing production also raises the demand for better marketing and distribution facilities and for more farm credits. It will also be difficult to maintain a set of incentives for farmers

- 
1. Rycroft and Clemmer, Factual Study of Asia, p. 67.
  2. Pearson Report, pp. 33, 295. The report states: In India, "over 60 per cent of all industrial investment flows into big cities. Calcutta alone handles 42 per cent of India's exports". "Agriculture employs 70 per cent of the national product. Yet, before the mid 1960s, agriculture received only about 15 per cent of the Indian public development expenditures and it was not regarded as a potential growth sector."
  3. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNCTAD Commodity Survey, 1966 (New York: United Nations, 1966), p. 14.
  4. Pearson Report, p. 32.
  5. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

which is adequate to elicit the necessary production, stimulate the continued adoption of new technology, and support diversification into other crops.<sup>1</sup>

But there may be other even more serious problems. As production is likely to increase, there will also be a sharp increase in the number of unemployed farmers. Surplus production, improved farming methods, and mechanisation will reduce the number of farmers required. Yet, as mentioned earlier, the bulk of Asian populations are still employed in the agricultural sector. Some observers forecast that the nineteen-seventies will see "the rush from the land to the cities" as unemployed farmers are forced to go to the cities looking for employment. But the rush to the cities has already created serious social problems in many nations. Asian cities such as Tokyo, Manila, Djakarta, Calcutta and Bombay are already too heavily populated. They have become the breeding-places of disease, crime, social discontent and strife. Further migration to these cities may "threaten real, red, raw, urban revolution".<sup>2</sup> The solution seems to be far more social and economic development programmes in the agricultural and rural sectors in order to reduce this rush from the land to the cities.

(b) Injustice in international trade

Industrialisation has been looked upon until now by many Asian nations as the way to prosperity and a solution to the problem of excessive population. But they have also discovered formidable problems limiting the growth of their industrialisation programmes in these post-war years. These problems, as a United Nations survey conducted in the late nineteen-forties and early 'fifties put it, have included "shortage of properly qualified manpower ... shortage of capital ... insufficiency of rawmaterials

---

1. Pearson Report, p. 61.

2. "Green Revolution," The Mirror (Singapore), Vol. 6, no. 1, January 5, 1970.

and power resources and a shortage of markets".<sup>1</sup> About ten years later the same problems were found to be still persisting.<sup>2</sup> However, in the process of finding solutions, injustice in international trading systems has been detected as one major cause underlying all these difficulties.

During the colonial period, the Asian countries were mainly suppliers of primary products, such as metals, rubber, cotton, jute or tea, to manufacturing industries in the West. They were also the markets for the manufactured goods imported back from the developed West. Thus the developed Western countries became increasingly rich and their industries grew at the expense of their overseas territories. As colonial policy did not usually include industrialisation in the colonies, most Asian nations have found themselves today with few manufactured goods to trade with. Their national incomes are dependent largely on export earnings from one or two primary products.<sup>3</sup> But demand in the developed countries for these products grows slowly — if at all, since the invention of synthetic substitutes in recent years. Further, the prices paid for these products have remained static or risen only slightly, while the prices paid by the developing countries for the imported manufactured goods, such as machinery needed for industrialisation, have risen sharply. And when developing countries export their manufactured goods, the developed countries will usually impose a quota or a tariff barrier to protect their own industries from competition.<sup>4</sup> All this means that the developing countries have not

---

1. Department of Social Affairs, The Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends, p. 276.

2. Rycroft and Clemmer, Factual Study of Asia, p. 58.

3. "Almost 90 per cent of the export earnings of the developing countries derive from primary products. Moreover, nearly half of these countries earn more than 50 per cent of their export receipts from a single primary commodity. As many as three-quarters of them earn more than 60 per cent from three primary products" (Pearson Report, p. 81).

4. E.S. Kirby, Economic Development in East Asia, pp. 29,87; Pearson Report, pp. 45,81; also the article, "British Development Policies," in ODI Review 3 (1969: published in London by the Overseas Development Institute Ltd. and edited by James Lambe); cf. also E. Jay, Twenty Questions on World Development, Question 7.

been getting a fair deal in their trade with developed countries. Their earnings have been small, amounting at times to actual losses; and consequently their industrialisation programmes have failed to grow at a satisfactory rate.<sup>1</sup>

(i) The burden of foreign debts

Foreign aid has not been able to solve all these problems. The United States of America has been the main giver of aid, but much of this went first to Western Europe. Kirby contends that in fact East Asia has not received any specially large share of aid from the West, certainly not per head of the population.<sup>2</sup> The Pearson Commission has also denied that foreign aid has been a burden on the rich countries. Only official development assistance, the Commission holds, should be designated as "aid"; and it is a fact that East Asia's share of grants in official development assistance has actually declined in recent years.<sup>3</sup> Further, much of this aid was not given for economic development, but for political and military development where this suited the interests of the donor nations.<sup>4</sup> Some foreign aid was also "tied" in some way to the purchase of goods and services from the donor country, so that in certain cases aid has actually been helping the industrial growth of the donor country first. The Pearson Commission has also noted that the conditions of aid have now become even more restrictive.<sup>5</sup> Foreign aid has also created the serious problem of

---

1. E.S. Kirby, Economic Development in East Asia, p. 61; Pearson Report, pp. 45-46.

2. E.S. Kirby, op. cit., pp. 219-220.

3. Pearson Report, pp. 139-140; G. Myrdal, Challenge of World Poverty, p. 338.

4. Ibid., esp. Chapter 11 on "Aid", pp. 332 ff.: "Around 1950, the United States' foreign-aid budget rather suddenly began to grow more rapidly, THE MAIN MOTIVATION WAS LESS A DESIRE TO MEET THE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES THAN IT WAS THE INTENSIFIED COLD WAR" (p. 333). See also E.S. Kirby, op. cit., pp. 295 ff.; Pearson Report, pp. 138 ff.

5. Ibid., pp. 76-79.

repayment of debts and rapid increase of debt service payments. In several Asian countries the ratio of public debt service to export earnings "has passed the danger limit".<sup>1</sup> By 1977 some developing countries, if aid is not increased, will be repaying more than they receive.<sup>2</sup>

(ii) Progress towards self-reliance

The Bandung Conference did touch on this problem of injustice in international trade.<sup>3</sup> But it took nearly ten years before the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was convened in Geneva in 1964 for the purpose of finding concrete solutions to the problem. UNCTAD agreed to the proposal to draw up a supplementary finance scheme as a means of countering the adverse effects of export instability suffered by many developing countries, and requested the World Bank to produce a feasibility study on such a scheme. The developed countries also pledged themselves to devote one per cent of their national income, official and private, as financial and technical assistance to the developing countries. On the institutional side, UNCTAD became a permanent organ of the United Nations.<sup>4</sup>

Much discussion about these issues followed the Conference. Meanwhile, there was great disappointment about the report that in the first half of the United Nations Development Decade, 1960-1964, the developing countries had failed to achieve the five per cent growth target. This

---

1. Pearson Report, pp. 72 ff.; UNCTAD Commodity Survey 1966, p. 14; "Economic Development Effort," The Mirror (Singapore), Vol. 7, no. 4, Jan. 25, 1971. "The external public debt of the developing countries rose by about 14 per cent per annum in the 1960's. In June, 1968, the recorded debt stood at \$47.5 billion. The reverse flow of debt service payments on official account amounted to \$4.7 billion in 1967. In the last ten years, these payments have increased by as much as 17 per cent per year ... In several countries (... Indonesia, India, Pakistan ...), the ratio of public debt service to export earnings exceeds 15 per cent" (Pearson Report, pp. 72-73).

2. E. Jay, Twenty Questions on World Development, Question 9.

3. Supra, pp. 19-20.

4. ODI Review 3 (1969), "British Development Policies," pp. 25-27.



failure took place in spite of an accelerated rate of growth in the volume of their exports. By contrast, the growth rate of the developed countries rose higher than in the previous period. The developing countries argued that the main reasons for their failure were decreasing foreign aid and a growing burden of interest and loan repayments.<sup>1</sup>

It was hoped that the next session of UNCTAD to be held in New Delhi in 1968 would result in some concrete and more binding aid commitments. But at the end of the 1968 session, no far-reaching decisions had been taken on the supplementary finance scheme as proposed in the 1964 session. The session did recommend that developed countries should in future make available as aid to developing countries one per cent of their gross national product rather than the previously agreed target of one per cent of net national income. The effect of this would be to raise the aid by 25 per cent. But unfortunately, the major donor nations were unwilling to take on such specific commitments.<sup>2</sup>

The Pearson Commission had put forward a similar proposal.<sup>3</sup> In agreement with UNCTAD, the Commission hoped that as a result of these increases in aid, coupled with their own efforts towards self-help, the developing countries would find themselves in a position to achieve a level of economic growth of at least six per cent per year. At this rate, a developing country, "even assuming rapid population growth ... would multiply its income per person by four in half a century, and many could bring themselves up to or beyond the present living standards of

---

1. UNCTAD Commodity Survey 1966, pp. 13-14.

2. ODI Review 3 (1969), "British Development Policies," pp. 27-29.

3. The Pearson Commission recommends that "each developed country should increase its resource transfer to developing countries to a minimum of 1 per cent of its Gross National Product as rapidly as possible, and in no case later than 1975". It should also "increase its commitments of official development assistance to the level necessary for net disbursement to reach 0.70 per cent of its Gross National Product by 1975 or shortly thereafter, but in no case later than 1980" (Pearson Report, pp. 143-152).

Western Europe within a century. It is an objective both challenging and practicable."<sup>1</sup>

The developing countries, the Commission observed, did not desire permanent dependence on foreign aid. At a six per cent growth rate their economy would eventually reach the level of "self-sustaining". By the year 2000, development aid to many of these countries "could be self-liquidating". "Progress toward self-reliance for all nations," the Commission pleaded, "will enhance mutual respect and is in the most profound interest of the world community as a whole."<sup>2</sup> "It is only right for those who have to share with those who have not." "It is to reduce disparities and remove inequities."<sup>3</sup>

Many developed countries, however, have not committed themselves to these specific recommendations. Myrdal has said that UNCTAD 1968 "was almost a complete failure". "And everything that has happened after the Conference makes one fear that the majority of developed countries, with the United States in the lead, is now intent upon putting UNCTAD on ice."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Paoul Prebisch, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD who has since resigned, attacked strongly the indifference and complacency of the developed countries to the serious nature of world development problems.<sup>5</sup> In 1968, the United Nations Economic and Social Council adopted a resolution for the mobilisation of public opinion in both developing and developed countries to realise the targets set for the Second United Nations Development Decade.<sup>6</sup> All nations of the world are now involved in this

---

1. Pearson Report, p. 125.

2. Ibid., p. 126.

3. Ibid., pp. 7 ff.

4. G. Myrdal, Challenge of World Poverty, pp. 294, 302.

5. Part of Prebisch's report on the Conference is quoted in Myrdal's book, pp. 294 ff. See also Pearson Report, p. 145.

6. Office of Public Information, Yearbook of the United Nations 1968 (New York: United Nations), pp. 330 ff.



crisis of world development, for future international relations and progress in developing countries depend very much on whether the widening gap between rich and poor countries can be bridged. Some developing countries have become disillusioned by the policy of the developed countries. Even before the UNCTAD 1968 session, some countries had already begun to turn away from UNCTAD to look for solutions elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Asian economic and cultural co-operation as recommended at the Bandung Conference in 1955 has been seriously reconsidered in recent years. Asian regional co-operation agencies, such as the Asian Development Bank, the Mekong Basin Project, the Japanese-sponsored Ministerial Council on Economic Development of Southeast Asia, the ECAFE and the Colombo Plan, have gained added importance. The most significant accomplishment of this renewed emphasis on Asian economic co-operation has been the establishment of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in August 1967.<sup>2</sup>

But success in East Asian programmes of economic development demands not only population growth control, a growing agricultural sector, foreign aid, expansion of trade and international and regional co-operation, but also sound social, cultural and political structures and attitudes in the Asian societies. Indeed, these structures and attitudes are very much the foundation of a nation. Therefore, the quest for freedom and independence and the quest for economic development are all related to the one central quest for nationhood or "national identity".

---

1. G. Myrdal, Challenge of World Poverty, pp. 295 f.

2. Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia constitute this Association. The formation was announced after a meeting of the five nations concerned at Bangsaen, Bangkok, on August 5-8, 1967. See Appendix G for its "aims and purpose".

### 3. The Quest for Nationhood

The earlier objective of Asian nationalism was to secure freedom and independence by driving out the Western colonial powers from East Asia. With this objective achieved, nationalism has changed its task to that of building new nations. At the time of independence, the governments of the new Asian nations were expected to improve the living standards and general welfare of their peoples and to safeguard the justice, freedom and dignity of all citizens. It was a time of rising expectations. On the one hand, Asian peoples were very much impressed by the modernity of life in the West made possible by application of modern technology and science. On the other, they were proud of their newly won freedom and their own cultural and religious heritage. They hated Western colonialism, but they wanted Western standards of life. Given similar technological and scientific knowledge and machinery they were confident that they too could achieve progress and prosperity. As mentioned earlier, economic development was looked upon then as the way to achieve these goals.

But if progress and prosperity were to come to East Asia, it became evident that some fundamental changes in the social, cultural and political structures and attitudes in Asian societies were also necessary. These, formed in a docile, feudal and agrarian past, were regarded by many economists, politicians and others as hindrances to progress in a new mobile, distributive, and industrial society, and so it is that transition, or rapid social change, has come to be a major fact of recent life in East Asia. The changes from old to new, traditional to modern, agrarian to industrial, have become the hallmark of the post-war Asian societies. This has indeed been the inevitable process of the Asian peoples' search for foundations for their new nations. And nationalism has again been a dynamic force in this quest for new nationhood.

(a) The agony of transitional societies

Change is not unfamiliar to the peoples of the West. During the past four hundred years, profound and radical changes in religion, culture, politics and economics have taken place and are still taking place in the West. These changes have come respectively from the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the American and French Revolutions of the seventeenth, the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth, and the Proletarian Revolution of the early twentieth. These revolutions have radically changed the nature of man's existence and his relation with society in the West. Similar upheavals have been sweeping over East Asia, their revolutionary power all the more radical and far-reaching because they have all come at the same time — at the end of the War.<sup>1</sup> Thus in the span of a single lifetime many millions of Asian men and women have been forced to grapple with great and unprecedented social, cultural and political changes; and the responses they have made and are making are affecting every aspect of their personal and national life. This can be seen in the life of many Asian urban societies of today.

Attracted by the modernity and comparatively higher living standards of city life, many people, particularly young people, have left their rural areas to live and to look for employment in big cities. But with their limited social and housing amenities and opportunities for employment, many cities have found themselves incapable of coping with this rapid increase of population.<sup>2</sup> Thus, those who have come to live

---

1. Harvey Wheeler, Democracy in a Revolutionary Era (Penguin Books Ltd., 1971; first published in the USA by Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 73: "That is, all of a sudden they /the people of new and developing countries/ must produce an advanced civilization."

2. Pearson Report, p. 295: "The life led by the vast majority of city dwellers is appalling. In Calcutta perhaps 100,000 persons ... live on the streets."

and work in cities have had to make great adjustments, not only to new physical and economic situations and social structures, but also to different ways of life, ideas and goals which demand fundamental changes in their outlook and personality. Indeed, the Asian people are paying a costly price for the hope of progress and prosperity.

The price is seen in "lostness", loneliness, frustration and disillusionment; in the strains and tensions in many areas of human relationships; in the family, between the generations, between employers and employees, between town and country, between different tribes and races that confront each other in the multi-tribal, multi-racial communities.<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, is the crisis of identity and strained human relationships in the transitional societies of Asia today. The old societies are passing away. The new are in the making. But meanwhile the Asian peoples have lost the kind of identity and security provided in their traditional family and old feudalistic social structure. Some have tried to regain this identity by conserving or reviving old values, or by trying to re-interpret old faiths, to provide support for their life in this transitional period of contemporary Asian history.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, this revival of Asian religions has proved to be of great importance in the whole process of nation-building in East Asia.

(b) The role of religion in the search for identity and foundations

The Asian peoples are in search of identity. Asian religions which are woven into the texture of Asian life can in the opinion of many provide this identity. "For commitment to religious truth that holds 'always and everywhere' operates to enhance the definiteness with which

---

1. Dilemmas and Opportunities: Christian Action in Rapid Social Change, Report of an International Ecumenical Study Conference at Thessalonica, Greece, July 25-August 2, 1959 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, second impression, 1961), pp. 7-8.

2. Ibid., p. 29.

I know who I am or my group knows what it is." Religion gives identity, stability and continuity. It holds its adherents together in unity.<sup>1</sup>

But with nationalism in the air, there has come along also a genuine renewed interest and pride in their own religious heritage among the Asian peoples. This renewed interest, coupled with nationalistic emotions and the quest for identity, have led to a resurgence of Asian religions,<sup>2</sup> a resurgence which can be seen in three main directions.

Firstly, Christianity is discredited as a foreign religion. Because of its close association with the West, Christianity has been "increasingly isolated by the rising tide of nationalism".<sup>3</sup> Christian divisions, forced conversions, the arrogance of some missionaries, poor indigenous leadership, and shallow understanding of Asian spirituality have often done little credit to the Christian faith.<sup>4</sup> "The people of Asia are under the impression that they already possess in their own religions all that Christianity can bring them. ... One fact cannot be denied ... Asia does not want Christianity."<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, Asian religions are undergoing modifications and re-interpretations in order to be relevant to the changing situations in the region. In India, Hindu scholars such as Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi and S. Radhakrishnan have brought about a "Neo-Hinduism" which

---

1. Robert N. Bellah (ed.), Religion and Progress in Modern Asia (New York: The Free Press; London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1965), p. 173. This book contains the addresses given at a conference on the relation between religion and progress in Asia. Bellah concludes that "religion and ideology are important elements in Asia's success or failure in further progress". He claims that religion gives identity and ideologies are more oriented to progress.

2. Rajah B. Manikam (ed.), Christianity and the Asian Revolution (Madras: Diocesan Press, 1954): Section II on "Resurgent Religions".

3. Bellah, Religion and Progress, p. 204.

4. Panikkar, Asia and Western Dominance, pp. 454-456 on "The Failure of the Christian Missions"; also Herbert, Introduction to Asia, pp. 59-62.

5. Ibid., pp. 61 and 62.

aims to support the Indian people's search for identity and the foundations of the new Indian nationhood.<sup>1</sup> On the Buddhist side, the clearest sign of resurgence was the sixth Great Buddhist Council of the Theravadic School which met in Rangoon from 1954 to 1956. This Council has given the Buddhists new confidence about the role that they must play in the task of nation-building and propagation of their faith.<sup>2</sup> Islam sees no fundamental distinction between itself and the state.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, political independence has led Islam to give even greater concern to the welfare and identity of the new nations, particularly in those countries where Muslims form the majority of the population.

There are few adherents of Asian religions who would object to the endeavour of their nation for progress.<sup>4</sup> There are Muslim writings "which stress that there is no conflict between Islam and progress; moreover, Islam is progress in itself."<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the concern of religion in Asia "is to relate itself to the great and pressing revolution of our time — the effort to abolish poverty, ignorance, and indignity; the striving for a better life on this earth; the emergence of a new social structure; and the continuous process of change."<sup>6</sup>

Thirdly, the resurgence is seen in the close alliance between nationalism and religion in many new Asian nations. If religions are needed to give identity and unity to the peoples, they are also pressing for official recognition and political influence in the state. Thus

---

1. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, pp. 131-137.

2. Ibid., pp. 139-140.

3. Ibid., p. 153.

4. Bellah, Religion and Progress, pp. 205-207.

5. The South-East Asia Round Table, report of a symposium on traditional cultures and technological progress in South-East Asia, held at Bangkok, Thailand, January 27-February 2, 1958 (Bangkok: SEATO Headquarters), pp. 21-23.

6. Bellah, Religion and Progress, p. 7. This was stated by Soedjatmoko of Indonesia, a participant at the conference.



Islam has become the state religion in Pakistan, Malaysia and Brunei, and commands great influence in Indonesia. Buddhism has gathered power in Burma, Ceylon and the whole of Indo-China, Confucianism in Taiwan and Roman Catholicism in the Philippines. India is officially a secular state, but undeniably Hinduism enjoys the greatest influence in society and state.<sup>1</sup>

But East Asian nations are composed of divergent racial, linguistic and religious communities. Considering only religion, the population of a nation usually consists of a good number of religious communities of which, usually, one constitutes a dominant majority while the rest are minorities. This pluralistic situation poses great problems in the task of building an integrated national community as well as safeguarding the religious rights of the various religious groups. The problem is made more complex by the fact that racial, linguistic and ethnic loyalties often correspond to those of religion. Thus legitimate or illegitimate demands from any group for rights and place in the new nation often appear as demands of a religious character, and an uneasy relationship between different communities has been the usual result.<sup>2</sup> It is apparent, then, that while religions can provide the basis or foundation of a nation's cultural identity and unity, they can also become a source of division fragmenting the nation and hindering its progress. In many Asian countries, religion has been exploited as an instrument of power-politics, and subsequent tensions between different religious communities have often led to communal, religious and racial riots, massacres, and civil strife. Therefore, since independence, the

---

1. Bellah, Religion and Progress, pp. 217-220. See Bellah's observation of how nationalism is linked to religion in order to serve the need for identity and unity in many new states.

2. M.M. Thomas and M. Abel (eds.), Religion, State and Ideologies in East Asia (Mysore: Wesley Press, 1965, for EACC, Bangkok), p. vii.



one common problem facing all new Asian nations has been the forming of a responsible government which can truly unite all the people as one nation working together towards an agreed national identity, progress and prosperity.

(c) The search for responsible government

The democratic system of government adopted by many new nations at the time of their independence very soon proved to be unworkable in East Asia. Democracy, many Asian politicians have argued, as understood and practised in the West would not be able to build an integrated nation in the region. For the introduction of the democratic concept has heightened so much the idea of individual rights and freedom among the Asian peoples that it has actually divided them according to their different religious, political, linguistic and racial backgrounds and loyalties. Subsequently, as mentioned earlier, many Asian communities were led into civil strife. As a result, some Asian nations have been forced to make a choice between some kind of authoritarian rule for unity and economic progress, and democracy which has often led to division and stagnation. For the sake of progress, many Asian peoples have found themselves under authoritarian rule and been willing to accept it. Thus, up to the end of the 1960s, there have been four main types of political systems of government in East Asia; these are (i) Basic Democracy, (ii) Guided Democracy, (iii) Parliamentary Democracy and (iv) People's Democracy. Each system has been claimed by the government in power as designed for the building of the nation. But it is clear that in all these systems the people have been deprived in varying degrees of fundamental human rights.<sup>1</sup> Only very recently Singapore's Minister of Defence,

---

1. Thomas and Abel, Religion, State and Ideologies, p. vii. This book is/ .....

Dr. Goh Keng Swee, has had to explain:-

There is no such thing as going all out for economic growth or nation-building or individual liberty, or this, that or the other. We have to find a right mix of these desirable objectives, often sacrificing a measure of one to get more of another. In Singapore, people often forget this ... They want to have their cake and eat it as well. It is alright for the general public to do this. But those who want to lead them cannot afford such careless thinking.<sup>1</sup>

But any political structure in East Asia must be prepared to change in order to accommodate the growing awareness among Asian peoples about human rights and social justice. As will be seen later, there is no sign that people in Asia would bind themselves under any kind of government so long as it failed to secure progress and prosperity and to safeguard the fundamental rights of all its people. Besides, there is a renewed desire, as mentioned earlier, for Asian cultural and economic co-operation. This is expressed in the Bandung principle of peaceful co-existence of all nations, despite their different political systems, which has become a central concern again among many Asian nations and peoples today. Therefore, the last issue in this quest for nationhood,

---

is a collection of essays about the different political systems adopted by the East Asian nations. For example "Basic Democracy" in Pakistan, "Guided Democracy" in Indonesia, "Parliamentary Democracy" in India, "People's Democracy" in Communist China. See also the article "Political Institutions and Parties in Asia" (author not named) in Guy Wint (ed.), Asia, A Handbook, pp. 390-396; and in the same book C.P. Fitzgerald's "Political Innovations in Asia" (pp. 404-409) and Aslam Siddiqi's "The Role of the Military in Asia" (pp. 410-418). Cf. also Harvey Wheeler, Democracy in a Revolutionary Era, pp. 60-73. Wheeler agrees that the traditional forms of Western democracy are inapplicable in developing countries, for the latter are at the "primordial community-building state of political development". He also argues, "The old nationalism of Europe looked inward for the creation of law and outward for the creation of power. The new nationalism of Asia and Africa is the opposite." For the latter, unlike the former, has no colonies for its exploitation to power. "What power the new nations create must be built out of their own peoples and resources." So nationalism or militarism in Asia and Africa, Wheeler contends, is not imperialistic or anti-international. Its objective is to integrate the peoples as one nation in the community of world nations. It has direct interest in the creation of an international rule of law and the United Nations, for these give the new nation legality and recognition.

1. "Selecting the Goals," The Mirror, Vol. 7, No. 20, May 17, 1971 (Singapore, Ministry of Culture), p. 1.

but by no means the least, centres on the problems of participation and stability in each Asian nation, and in the field of inter-Asian relations.

(d) The problem of participation and stability

The modernization of a people involves the development of a participant society, one in which more and more people ... participate in the economic, social and political life of a nation.<sup>1</sup>

This observation certainly brings out a major problem facing many Asian nations since independence. Participation in nation-building must mean more than work and labour. It must also mean fair distribution of wealth and sharing in the decision-making processes of the society and nation. No government can ignore these fundamental principles of economic justice, political equality and human dignity in the life of a nation. Yet there are groups of people in Asian societies who have claimed that they have been prevented from taking a full part in their national life.

The first group are the fifteen millions of Chinese scattered in all parts of East Asia.<sup>2</sup> During the high tide of nationalism and fear of communist expansion, these Chinese were very much suspected of being a "fifth column" for China in the country of their residence. Their insistence on preserving their own customs, language and living habits, and their control over much of the commerce in most South-east Asian countries, caused further resentment from the nationalists. Thus, during the 1950s, overseas Chinese were hard-pressed by the nationalists to show their genuine loyalty to the new nations. Some took the choice of going back to China or Taiwan. However, the rest have accepted the

---

1. Rycroft and Clemmer, Factual Study of Asia, p. 88.

2. J. Harry Haines, Chinese of the Diaspora, IMC Research Pamphlets No. 14 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1965), p. 9. This figure refers only to those in South-east Asia. The total population of the region was estimated then to be 185 million.

challenge to become loyal citizens of the new nations. But in certain countries such as Malaysia, tension between the Chinese and other nationals has persisted. Some Malaysian Chinese have claimed that they are being treated as second-class citizens despite the fact that they have demonstrated their loyalty to the nation.<sup>1</sup> Overseas Chinese, with their talents and wealth, possess great potential. With a just government, they could play a positive role in the task of nation-building. Conversely, they can be driven to isolation, bitterness and indifference which could indeed turn them into a disruptive force in any nation.

The farmers are the second neglected group in many Asian nations. Asian farmers are still facing problems such as absentee landlordism, insecurity of tenancy, poverty, lack of modern tools and low social status.<sup>2</sup> Much of the land is owned by a minority. The owners reap the earnings while hired workers are given low wages. "Increases in income have been highly concentrated in relatively few hands," the Pearson Commission confirms.<sup>3</sup> Yet, Myrdal observes, "there is in most underdeveloped countries no present sign that the social and economic inequality in agriculture will not continue to widen, indeed at an accelerating rate." "The quest for land reform is almost everywhere weakening, partly under the influence of the vision of the 'Green Revolution'." Myrdal urges the developing countries "to induce far-reaching changes in their economic and social structures. Centrally placed among these changes must be land reform in the inclusive sense."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, some observers believe that the future of Asia will be fought not in the

---

1. Haines, Chinese of the Diaspora, pp. 12-16.

2. Rycroft and Clemmer, Factual Study of Asia, pp. 74-75.

3. Pearson Report, p. 54.

4. Myrdal quoted by C.L. Sulzberger in the latter's article, "Revolutionary Modesty of Developing Nations," The Mirror, Vol. 7, No. 13, March 29, 1971 (Singapore: Ministry of Culture), p. 6.

cities but in the rural and agricultural areas, among the farmers, hired workers and peasants.<sup>1</sup> Their grievances may eventually spark off some serious troubles in many Asian nations. Potentially, they are in fact the greatest political force. As they form the majority of the population and working force in many East Asian nations, whoever can succeed in winning their loyalty will also win the power of the nation. The communist victory in China and the strength of the Viet Cong have clearly demonstrated their political potential.

Young people form the third group who feel dissatisfied about their society. In most countries, they form about half of the total population.<sup>2</sup> Born after the war or after independence, many of them do not have any experience of the struggle for freedom during the colonial period. But through education and modern means of communication they have gathered certain ideals of their own which are different from those of the comparatively older revolutionaries who, having gone through the hard struggle for freedom, are now occupying important positions in the government. The conflict between youth and government develops when the former feel disenchanted by the social and economic injustices and poverty existing in their societies. Nor can they accept the rule of any government which has failed to eradicate these evils. But the refusal or indifference of the government in power to consider seriously their grievances and aspirations for reform and greater participation of the people in the decision-making processes of the nation has only deepened the conflict. Indeed, some government leaders have responded by urging them to obey authority and go back to their classrooms. Thus, many young Asians, particularly college

---

1. Rycroft and Clemmer, Factual Study of Asia, p. 72 — quoted from Michael Edwards' book Asia in Balance (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 169.

2. Rycroft and Clemmer, op. cit., pp. 33, 38.



students and intellectuals, are feeling much rejected and isolated in their aspirations. Subsequently, some have simply become indifferent to the nation and turned themselves solely to the pursuit of material gain. Some have turned to ideologies — Marxism, Maoism, socialism, permissiveness or anything which can offer solutions to the problems which they believe are facing their society. Some have come out in protest, raising demonstrations or even open rebellions and creating serious tensions. Indeed, Asian youth has been partly responsible for either overthrowing or forcing changes upon some of the Asian governments which were regarded as inept, corrupt and inefficient.<sup>1</sup>

Some Asian political leaders are coming to accept this growing problem. Recently, for example, Singapore's Foreign Minister, Mr. S. Rajaratnam, has admitted that the present generation of Asians believe "that poverty and degradation [are] wholly man-made and therefore within the capacity of enlightened rulers to solve".<sup>2</sup> He calls on Asian leaders to shape "new directions for Asian politics and economics to meet the needs and aspirations of the post-imperialist generation". But Rajaratnam rejects actions of defiance and rebellion as a way of displacing an inept government. He regards these as a hangover from the old anti-colonial nationalism whose policy was to malign and disrupt the colonial government and to make society ungovernable. But with independence achieved, he calls for a new "modernizing nationalism" which can "re-orientate people's attitudes towards government and authority".<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, however, a dangerous situation which was in existence even before independence has developed further in some countries. This

---

1. For example the Korean government under President S. Rhee in 1960, the Indonesian government under President Sukarno in 1965, and the Pakistan government under President Ayub Khan in 1969.

2. "New Directions for Asian Politics," The Mirror, Vol. 6, No. 17, April 27, 1970 (Singapore: Ministry of Culture), p. 6.

3. Ibid., p. 1.

has been the widening gap between rich and poor. "Social pyramids" are going up in many Asian societies — with a few rich on top, an indifferent and self-satisfied middle class immediately below, and the masses of poor and destitute at the bottom living in slums.<sup>1</sup> One United Nations report has forecast that for Asia, the 1970s will be a critical period of social change which may bring sharpening polarization and conflict among its peoples:

This "prospect ... grows out of rising political demands by workers, farmers and university students, and 'the apparent inability of the elites' — the traditional and the modern ruling class — to adjust to those demands".<sup>2</sup>

The Pearson Commission also recognizes political structures as one major problem which may hinder future development in the developing countries. It strongly recommends that in the next two decades measures should be taken to bring about in these countries more equitable distribution of wealth, land reform, an efficient government machinery and a greater degree of participation in political life.<sup>3</sup> Myrdal has labelled the developing countries as "in varying degrees 'soft states'", meaning all the various types of social indiscipline, social and economic inequalities that together make a country underdeveloped. He argues that "greater equality is a pre-condition for lifting a society out of poverty".<sup>4</sup>

But while some Asian politicians have come to consider more seriously the problem of participation, they are also facing the difficulty of finding suitable solutions. For example, Rajaratnam's rejection of defiance and rebellion and his call for "techniques and procedures for

- 
1. "The Social Situation in the ECAFE Region," The Mirror, Vol. 6, No. 17, April 27, 1970 (Singapore: Ministry of Culture), p. 5.
  2. "Another Decade of Strife Ahead," The Mirror, Vol. 7, No. 7, February 15, 1971, p. 1 — taken from a UN report on "1970 Report on the World Social Situation".
  3. Pearson Report, p. 54.
  4. Myrdal, Challenge of World Poverty, pp. 211 and 70.



the PEACEFUL displacement of inept governments" (capitals mine) has clearly reflected this great difficulty.<sup>1</sup> For in his understanding stability is regarded as one important pre-condition for any success in Asian development efforts. In recent years Singapore government leaders have repeatedly emphasised the necessity of this pre-condition within each Asian nation and among them all. "Close Nexus Between Political Stability and Economic Expansion" — "Stability for Constructive Endeavour"<sup>2</sup> — these have gradually become the understanding of more and more Asian government leaders. Goh Keng Swee has said: "The creation of wealth ... is basically a simple process ... What is more difficult is a social and political order that enables development to take place. Where a stable political system is achieved, progress can be spectacular."<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, these Asian leaders have learnt this from past experiences. All the communal disturbances, religious riots, revolutions, insurrections, coups and counter-coups that have happened during the past two and a half decades have had adverse effects on development efforts. For example, the Korean War between 1950 and 1952, the long years of military conflicts in Indo-China, the sporadic conflicts between Pakistan and India and their open warfare in 1965, the "confrontation" between Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia during the years 1963-1965 — all these diverted much of the limited resources of the countries concerned to military spending.<sup>4</sup> The establishment of ASEAN could not be realised

- 
1. "New Directions for Asian Politics," The Mirror, Vol. 6, No. 17, April 27, 1970, p. 1.
  2. Headlines of front pages of The Mirror, Vol. 5, No. 49, December 8, 1969 and Vol. 6, No. 3, January 19, 1970 (Singapore: Ministry of Culture).
  3. "Economic Development Effort," The Mirror, Vol. 7, No. 4, January 25, 1971 (Singapore: Ministry of Culture), p. 4.
  4. Kirby, Economic Development in E. Asia, p. 214; Pearson Report, pp. 296, 304. During the "confrontation" only barter trade was possible between Singapore and Indonesia. Trade in all three nations was adversely affected. See Appendix H.

until 1967 after the "confrontation" was called off. The wars in Indo-China have kept the standard of living in Cambodia, Laos, North and South Vietnam among the lowest in the world and resulted in national economies which are dependent largely, if not entirely, on foreign aid. At the Bandung Conference in 1955, a call went out for regional economic and cultural co-operation in Asia. This could not proceed further as some Asian nations soon came into conflict with each other. As mentioned earlier, there are some new signs of response to this call.<sup>1</sup> But their actual outcome certainly remains to be seen. The problem of participation and stability in the quest for nationhood in East Asia is still in search of better solutions.

These have been and still are the three main quests of East Asia. While they have been examined separately here, in fact they are very closely inter-related. As seen in the course of this section, nationalism has been the main driving force behind these quests. It has expressed itself in the struggle for freedom and independence, in the search for progress and prosperity, and in the task of establishing the selfhood of the new Asian nations. In all these, there have been "grave perils and great opportunities", sorrows and joys, despair and hope. These have been all mingled together in the total life of the Asian peoples and nations during the past two and a half decades.

Asian Christians have claimed that God is at work in His world. He is present and active, holding all things together in East Asia. And He has called His followers to participate in His presence and activity.<sup>2</sup> This study, then, must now turn to an examination of the Asian Christian response to that call, and of their role in the situation.

---

1. Supra, p. 34.

2. Supra, p. 2.

---

SECTION II

---

## S E C T I O N    I I

### ASIAN CHRISTIAN RESPONSE : FIRST PERIOD, 1945-1957

---

A study of the Asian Christian response in relation to the quests of East Asia from the end of the Second World War up to about 1968 can be better accomplished if it is divided into two periods: the first from 1945 to 1957, the second from 1958 onwards. There are three main reasons in support of this division.

To begin with, this first period, as seen in Section I, was undoubtedly marked by the Asian peoples' struggles for political freedom and independence. But by the year 1957 all, apart from Singapore, had attained that objective. The period from 1958 onwards was a time clearly characterised by the new nations' concerted efforts for economic development and the establishment of their nationhood. Secondly, the spirit of peaceful co-existence and Asian solidarity coming out from the Bandung Conference lasted only a few years. The border dispute between the two leaders of the Conference, India and China, resumed from about 1958 and eventually broke out into open warfare in 1962. From about the same time, too, some Asian nations began to suffer a period of internal upheavals and strained relationships with one another.

The third and chief justification for the proposed chronological division must be the formation of the EACC in 1957, in that not only has the significance of its formation been compared by some Christians with that of the Bandung Conference, but also because it opened a new chapter in the response of Asian Christians to the quests of East Asia. Before the EACC was formed, one could only talk about Asian Churches or Asian Christians in separate existence from each other in their respective nations. But in the EACC, Asian Christians could now find for the first

time a concrete expression of their solidarity and unity in mission and service to their nations and to the region as a whole. Furthermore, soon after the EACC came into being there was a definite change of direction in the understanding of the Gospel and the mission of the Church coming from the new organization. The new emphasis was quite different from that of the first period. In other words, 1957 marked a turning-point both for the Asian quests and for Asian Christian response.

Section II, then, will consist of an examination of the response in the first period. This period, as will be seen later, was distinguished by the attempts of Asian Christians to assess the nature and the needs of the Asian quests and the primary task of the churches in the region. In the process, some were also led to understand anew the meaning of the unity of Christians in East Asia.

## Chapter One: THE CHRISTIAN ASSESSMENTS

---

### 1. A Grave Prospect for Christian Advance

In his address given at a meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America in New York in February 1950, Charles W. Ranson, then general secretary of the International Missionary Council, said that his sixteen-week travels in "a large part of Asia" had revealed to him that "religious nationalism" and "militant communism" were "two of those forces which meet you almost anywhere you go in Eastern Asia today". He called it "religious nationalism", for Asian nationalism, he explained, had a tendency to join forces with the new religious and cultural self-consciousness in each country in order to face the difficult task of building a new and stable society. He warned, "This is going to have far-reaching effects in some countries upon the prospects of the Christian Church;" for "there is, consequently, coming to birth a kind of cultural and religious nationalism that is aggressive and often hostile to the Christian faith." As for "militant communism", he said, the struggle for political independence has led to a social revolution "which is sweeping across every Asian country". The oppressed Asian masses were now claiming their rights and justice from their governments and from society, but the "Marxist ideology" was also at work "seeking to lay hold of the revolution and to pervert it to its own purposes".<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, among all the "grave perils" threatening East Asia during

---

1. Towards a Christian Strategy in East Asia, an address given by Charles W. Ranson at an enlarged meeting of the Committee of Reference and Counsel of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City, on February 23, 1950 (WCC Library, Geneva).



the years from the end of the War to about 1957, the major fears and concerns among many Asian Christians, missionaries and world ecumenical leaders were three: communism, the resurgence of Asian religions, and narrow Asian nationalism.

(a) Communism — "the most obvious menace"

At the first post-war IMC meeting held at Whitby, Canada, in 1947, at which many Asian delegates were present, communism was already looked upon as a "rival faith", and much attention was given to the challenge presented by it to the work of the churches in Asia and in other parts of the world.<sup>1</sup> In 1948, after extended travels in East Asia, Bishop Stephen Neill expressed a similar view: he thought that while opportunity for evangelism then was still very great, yet "it may very soon pass away. The most obvious menace is communism." He wondered indeed whether the opportunity still available then was not "a last opportunity".<sup>2</sup>

The Eastern Asia Christian Conference held at Bangkok in December 1949 was the first as well as the largest and most representative post-war Christian meeting held on Asian soil. It brought together on a historical occasion about eighty Asian Christian leaders, top officials of the IMC and the WCC, and delegates and observers from other ecumenical organisations and mission agencies. The main purpose of the gathering was to discuss the question of establishing a joint office of the IMC and the WCC in East Asia; but the conference was also asked to assess "the Christian prospect" in the region. In this assessment, the growing influence of communism, its victory in China, and the resurgence of Asian religions, dominated much of the deliberations and findings. The three

---

1. Margaret Sinclair, "Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World," IRM 37 (1948), p. 32.

2. Stephen C. Neill, "The Asian Scene," p. 73.

top officials of the "parent bodies" — then Ranson and John A. Mackay, respectively the general secretary and the chairman of the IMC; and W.A. Visser't Hooft, the general secretary of the WCC — all expressed their fear of and opposition to communism. Ranson believed that "what has happened, and will happen, in China is bound to have a most profound effect on all the countries of Eastern Asia ... The Church must prepare its people."<sup>1</sup> To Mackay, Christianity and communism were "two rival systems in East Asia and in the world today". In matters of commitment, enthusiasm and discipleship, he regarded the communists as "our greatest rivals".<sup>2</sup> Visser't Hooft delivered some strong words about communism, saying that communism "does not create a community of persons" — "Religion is conceived as the opiate of the people" — "The fight against the Church is a basic element in communist philosophy." He observed that one of the dangers facing the churches in a communist situation was that they might become "a 'Yes' church like the Russian church, a tool in the hands of the state".<sup>3</sup>

Apart from these three world ecumenical leaders, many other Asian delegates at the conference also spoke about the threat of communism. Rajah Manikam, then executive secretary of the Christian Council of India and Pakistan, believed that "a dynamic and militant communism challenges the Christian Church in most parts of East Asia".<sup>4</sup> Shizue Hikaru of Japan reported that from the end of the War until 1947 the membership of the Japanese communist party had "increased sevenfold ... Numerically, it is already larger than the Church in Japan ... The church is unprepared to stem the present wave of communism in Japan."<sup>5</sup>

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 66.

2. Ibid., pp. 108-109.

3. Ibid., pp. 129-130.

4. Ibid., p. 4.

5. Ibid., pp. 133-134.

Reports from churches and Christian councils in Ceylon, Malaya, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines all spoke against communism as a threat to the work of the churches in their countries.<sup>1</sup> The report from South Korea, in particular, presented a very grim prospect for Christians in that country. It said:

A strong, determined Communistic underground is organised in South Korea and has as one of its principal targets the church and Christians. Communistic outbreaks are occurring continually in various parts of the South, on larger or smaller scale, and inevitably churches are demolished or burned and Christian leaders, pastors, and elders killed or beaten.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, at Bangkok in 1949, communism was strongly condemned. In an official statement the delegates gave their reasons as follows:

Because communism lacks a conception of the independence of moral reality over against power, it denies the supremacy of the moral law over power-politics and hence in the long run defeats the very purpose of the social revolution. This ideological error in communism, which turns a social revolution for justice into a new oppression, arises out of the self-righteousness of its militant atheism; and at this point the conflict between Christianity and communism is fundamental.<sup>3</sup>

The Korean War certainly drew even more serious attention from Christians about the problem of communism. At the Ecumenical Study Conference for East Asia sponsored by the WCC and held at Lucknow, India, in December 1952, H.P. Van Dusen rightly raised in his opening address the question of whether the conference would have to wrestle "with the vast and pressing complex of issues which are presented to all nations by the advance of secular totalitarianism, notably world communism".<sup>4</sup> And the conference, with about sixty delegates from different Asian countries, did just that. While the findings of these deliberations will be discussed later, it is significant to note here that even M.M. Thomas of India, who pleaded at the Bangkok Conference for a non-military approach

---

1. See Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 8-20 and 25-60.

2. Ibid., p. 39.

3. Ibid., pp. 114-117.

4. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 2.

to the problem and who has become since then one of the principal leaders and thinkers in the EACC and the WCC, said at Lucknow: "We must recognize that military power is necessary in opposing Communist power and as a means of giving us time to bring about social reconstruction which is necessary to defeat Communist propaganda."<sup>1</sup>

Apparently, the Korean War affected his views as of that time. The Lucknow conference decided to ask the Ecumenical Study Commission in India, in co-operation with other Asian Christians in East Asia, to produce a book on "Christianity and the Asian Revolution" for the use of the second WCC Assembly which was to be held at Evanston, USA, in 1954. This important book, edited by Manikam, was subsequently published and widely read in the world ecumenical movement.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the important recognition given by the world ecumenical movement to Asian Christian interpretations of the upheavals and turmoils in East Asia was clearly seen. However, once again, the concern about the spreading influence of Chinese communism ran through much of the book. Some expressed admiration for China's new military strength and her concern for social justice, but none could accept the communist ideology. "The New China has had a profound influence on the rest of Asia" — "The Communist parties of Asia look to China for tactical guidance." Many Asians were opposed to the "new imperialism of Russia and China" which, together with that of the Western powers, was said to be responsible for the war going on in Indochina.<sup>3</sup> Manikam then sent out the alarm that "communist influence has also infiltrated the life of the churches". He noted that many Asian Christians were attracted by the communists' stand for social justice. But, he argued, "these well-meaning Christians"

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 97.

2. Christianity and the Asian Revolution (Madras 1954).

3. Ibid., pp. 19, 24, 80.

were actually failing to see the real nature of communism. "A Christian can never own allegiance to it, since the Christian view of the nature and destiny of man is fundamentally opposed to that of the Communist."<sup>1</sup>

Manikam appeared to be one of the very few Christians who wrote not only about what the Chinese communists had achieved, but also about the pains of revolution that many Chinese people had to go through during the first few years of the communist victory. He wrote:

A nation-wide "Accusation Movement" was vigorously promoted ... Wives turned against their husbands, and children against their parents, and every one tried to excel in accusing the other of sins against the government or sins of pro-imperialism.

On the churches in China, he said:

At the beginning, many Christian leaders hoped to influence Communism in China. Later on, the Church itself began to succumb to pressure from the State, and the church administration .... Even prominent Christians who were ardent admirers of the Communist Government were persecuted, because they could not go the whole way with the Communists. Today the Church in China is cut off entirely from contact and fellowship with the churches of the Western world.<sup>2</sup>

Manikam had no illusions about the communist revolution in China. To him, what was happening in China was a warning to the rest of the Christian forces in East Asia. He repeated his fear and opposition in another book written jointly with Winburn T. Thomas in 1956. In it they said: "It is Christianity's adversary anywhere."<sup>3</sup>

(b) Resurgent religions — "in violent conflict with Christianity"

Manikam also expressed fear of the resurgent Asian religions. He said at the Bangkok Conference, "Contending crusading forces of revitalized

---

1. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, pp. 275-276.

2. Ibid., pp. 232-233.

3. Winburn T. Thomas and Rajah B. Manikam, The Church in Southeast Asia (New York: Friendship Press, 1956), p. 47.

old religions shout their slogans, and engage in violent conflict with Christianity."<sup>1</sup> Asian Christians did observe then that nationalism had also brought about among the Asian people a new awareness and pride for their own religious and cultural heritage. Manikam commented: "A hundred per cent Pakistani means a MUSLIM Pakistani, or a hundred per cent Burmese a BUDDHIST Burmese."<sup>2</sup> Thus, apart from communism, the question of "resurgent religions" was one other major concern among the delegates at the Bangkok Conference. Many individual delegates and reports from different countries spoke of their anxiety and of the problems of the churches existing as small minority groups amid the fervour of this resurgence.<sup>3</sup> Reports from Ceylon and Burma spoke of Buddhists' demand for power; in India, Hinduism was reported to be playing an increasingly dominant role in the life of the new nation; Islam became the state religion of Pakistan, and Christian work in that country was reported to be meeting great opposition from the state. In Indonesia, Muslims were joining forces together "to overcome all barriers that thwart the expansion of Islam", while in Thailand the largest Protestant church — the Church of Christ in Thailand — had yet to be given full recognition by a Buddhist government. Hearing such reports, the main fear among the delegates at Bangkok appears to have focussed upon the infringement of religious liberty.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the conference advised:

The Christian churches and national Christian councils must take an energetic stand against all these infringements of religious freedom and assist in educating the adherents of all religions towards a fuller understanding of the nature of religious liberty.

The delegates wanted to make sure that Asian people had the freedom to

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 4.

2. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 214.

3. See Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 8-20 and 25-60.

4. Ibid., pp. 137-139: see the records of the symposium on "The Problem of Religious Liberty in East Asia."



become Christians and thus increase the membership of the churches.

They said:

The Christian Church cannot accept anything less than the freedom which allows it to be what it is, namely, the body through which the Lord Jesus Christ continually calls men and women from all nations, races, and religions into communion with himself. The Church dare not become a static minority; it must ever remain an ever-expanding, dynamic, free and open society.<sup>1</sup>

During the years 1954 to 1956, some Asian Christians were particularly concerned about the growing influence of Buddhism which was being generated, as mentioned in Section I, from the Sixth Buddhist Council meeting at Rangoon. G.B. Jackson, the study secretary of the National Christian Council of Ceylon, thought that this Council was in some measure "a response to what Evanston [WCC Assembly] stands for". He reported:

Here Buddhism emerges, not just as the faith of a third of the world's population, but to challenge the Christian Church as a rival saviour of a distracted world. "What is the meaning," a leading Burmese statesman asked, ... "of your Evanston theme 'Christ the Hope of the World?' It is in Buddhism, and only in Buddhism, that there lies any hope for the world's peace."<sup>2</sup>

Jackson believed that it was the Council's repeated emphasis on the world's need for peace and the ability of Buddhism to meet it that was drawing some converts from the educated classes in both America and Asia to Buddhism. He noted that Buddhists in the world were closing their ranks to combat Western disintegrating influences and to embark on a world mission, making the teachings of the Buddha more widely known both in Asia and the West. In his anxiety, Jackson failed to mention that world peace was certainly also what Christians had wanted during those years of great international tension of the Cold War.

Evidently, then, to many Asian Christians, this resurgence of non-Christian religions presented another serious challenge to the work

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 117.

2. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 138.

and claims of the Christian churches in East Asia. Paul Devanandan of India observed that in this resurgence

... it is not the validity of Christianity as a religion that is challenged; many moderns are willing to accept Christianity as a religion among other religions. What they question is whether there is justification in the Christian contention that it is a religion which is not only better than others but is the final and absolute truth for all time.<sup>1</sup>

To Manikam, also, it was quite clear that "these resurgent religions defy the exclusive claims of Christianity and block its progress".<sup>2</sup> To Ranson, the Christian task in this particular field looked very formidable indeed: he rightly observed that in East Asia

The Christian gospel has not yet made an effective impact on the adherents of any of the great classical religions which have their home in this continent ... Where men and women have been won ... to the Christian allegiance, they have been won from a background which is primarily animistic and tribal.

He questioned whether Christians

... have lost ground, and that neither amongst the contemporary missionaries nor amongst the indigenous thinkers in the Christian churches are we really producing the kind of Christian scholarship, the kind of Christian apologetic, which we need if we are going effectively to challenge, and evangelize these great, deep-rooted, powerful, religious traditions?<sup>3</sup>

## 2. The Search for Positive Understanding

But if communism was regarded by many as a menace to Christianity, blocking the progress of the churches' work in East Asia and threatening the future of many Asian countries, some had also started, behind the fear and anxiety, a search for a positive understanding and solution to the whole problem.

- 
1. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 114.
  2. Ibid., p. 281.
  3. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 65.

(a) Communist expansion — an opportunity for Christian social witness

It is very significant to note that while Chinese communism was so much feared at Bangkok, "a message prepared by a group of Chinese Christians" in China and presented at the conference showed that these Chinese Christians did not all share such fears.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, they regarded the new "People's Government" as the dawn of "a new era". The communist victory, they said, was "the culmination of a century's struggle against external exploitation and centuries of internal feudalistic oppressions. It is the main milestone in the nation's struggle for national unity, independence and democracy."<sup>2</sup> In the past, they acknowledged, "the Chinese church has kept itself aloof from the political torrents that surged around it", but they felt that in the new era, as well as being "Christian believers ... we also have our duties to perform as Chinese citizens".<sup>3</sup> They were sure that "the Christian movement will have its due place in the future Chinese society and will have a genuine contribution to make ... its future road will not be a bed of roses ... The Chinese church will not emerge through this historical change unaffected. It will suffer a purge, and many of the withered branches will be amputated. But we believe it will emerge stronger and purer in quality, a more fitting witness to the gospel of Christ."<sup>4</sup>

This Chinese message was received at Bangkok with mixed feelings. Dr. S.C. Leung, a Chinese Christian leader in Hong Kong and the executive secretary of the Conference as well as a vice-chairman of the IMC, appeared to be in agreement with the view as expressed in the message. He said the situation in China had presented the churches and Christians

---

1. "A message prepared by a group of Chinese Christians for mission boards abroad and presented to the conference in the absence of an official report from the National Christian Council of China" (Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 20-25).

2. Ibid., p. 20.

3. Ibid., p. 21.

4. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

with challenges to self-examination, greater Christian unity, a witness to the complete gospel of Christ and a deeper understanding and a fuller exemplification of the Christian faith. He did not think that the gospel would be shut away from China. He said: "The trouble is that we often look with so much regret and longing upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened."<sup>1</sup>

However, Ranson did not share such an optimistic view. He said: "We all hope most earnestly that the optimism of some of our Chinese Christian friends will be justified by events."<sup>2</sup> But it was M.M. Thomas who made at Bangkok the most notable plea for a new approach to the problem of communist expansion in East Asia: "The basic fact of the situation," he said, "is the social revolution, which seeks justice. The Church must welcome the demand of the people for a fuller participation in the life of society, at the level where power is exercised."<sup>3</sup> His proposal was for a "spiritual resistance", which to him meant primarily a movement aimed at granting to the common people of Asia the fundamental political and economic rights and democratic principles of government.

Both Thomas's plea for a new understanding and approach and Ranson's cautious view appeared in the Conference's official findings on "The Church in Social and Political Life." For example:

The churches dare not assume a purely passive, indifferent or neutral attitude towards the crucial political and social issues of the times.

.....  
The proclamation of the Word of God, with a profound sense of its relevance to the ideological and political conflicts of the Orient, is therefore the central task of the Church in Asia.

.....  
The Christian must distinguish between the social revolution which seeks justice and the totalitarian ideology which interprets and perverts it. The Christian Church must welcome

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 131-132.

2. Ibid., p. 66.

3. Ibid., pp. 130-131.

the demand of the peoples for a fuller participation in the life of the society at the level where the power is exercised, since this is an expression of human dignity; and the rise of communism is a judgment on the churches for their failure to do so.

.....  
The revolution in China, though led by Communists, may not yet have manifested fully the evil consequences of the moral relativism integral to communism ... In those countries where the possibility exists of transforming the social order democratically so that the means employed may not destroy the ends of justice, a true social democracy may be the answer to communism.<sup>1</sup>

Thus at Bangkok, amid all the fears and condemnation, there were also signs of a new understanding and a plea for a new approach to the problem. Communism could not be condemned outright. Undoubtedly, communists were regarded as atheists and totalitarians, but Asian Christians needed to admit also that the communists' concern for social and economic justice was a correct one. Indeed, Christians themselves should have long been involved in this struggle and concern: "The rise of communism is a judgment on the churches for their failure to do so." Or, as Leung saw it, communism presented an opportunity to the Asian Christians to follow the example of the early Christians who "outthought, outlived and outdied the pagan world".<sup>2</sup>

This line of thinking was followed at the East Asia Christian Literature Conference held at Singapore in December 1951. The delegates, who came from eleven countries in Asia and some from Great Britain and America, declared:

We believe that the Church should show to its own members and to non-Christians its vital concern in social justice.

.....  
We are unanimous in urging that there should be no direct polemic against communism, but a critical and objective examination of communism and capitalism alike needed, indeed of all political and economic theories, in the light of the Christian revelation.<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. "The Church in Social and Political Life," Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 114-117.
  2. Ibid., p. 132.
  3. The International Missionary Council and The World Council of Churches, Minutes of the East Asia Christian Literature Conference, Singapore, December 7-11, 1951, p. 38.



Similarly, the Third World Conference of Christian Youth held for the first time on Asian soil at Kottayam, India, in December 1952 expressed its belief that

... in the Christian opposition to communism ... our basic attitude should not be one of hatred and fear but of Christian love and understanding of the deep concern for the poor and the oppressed which lies behind communism. ....

We must accept Communism as a challenge by Christ for the Church to be more deeply concerned with the world and the people around it and to demonstrate within its own life better qualities of social justice.<sup>1</sup>

Such understanding apparently came from the Asian delegates, who constituted the majority at this conference.<sup>2</sup>

But it was at the Lucknow Conference that this search for a more positive understanding of the problem of communism made itself clearly evident. Van Dusen's request for a close consideration of "The Responsible Society in East Asia in the Light of the World Situation" produced some findings which certainly surprised those ecumenical leaders and Asian Christians who regarded communism as an adversary of Christianity and nations in East Asia — a surprise manifested in the fact that the Conference felt obliged to qualify the report from this particular discussion group as only "reflecting the general consensus of opinion in the Group but not to be regarded as a statement unanimously accepted throughout".<sup>3</sup> The report in question states:

We are concerned with social justice ... Communism has awakened and challenged our conscience to see the need for action. It is not, however, primarily the fear of communism but our concern for our brother for whom Christ died, that should impel us to fulfil our social obligations. But a positive

- 
1. World Conference of Christian Youth, Footprints in Travancore: Report of the Third World Conference of Christian Youth, December 11-26, 1952 (Coonor, Nilgiris, India: India Sunday School Union, India Edition), p. 67.
  2. Report of the Executive Committee to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, ECR V, No. 3 (April 1953), p. 275.
  3. Lucknow 1952 Report, pp. 27-33.



programme for social justice will help to meet the challenge of Communism.

. . . . .  
The present world struggle with its hot and cold wars militates against progress in social reconstruction. We cite the following as evidences of this in East Asia:

(1) When American foreign policy is determined primarily by the criterion of anti-Communism it generally strengthens conservative and reactionary political groups in the East Asian scene and tends to weaken the forces of healthy social reform. This line is bound to be self-defeating because in the final analysis social and spiritual health is the best answer to Communism.

(2) Large-scale rearmament reduces the capacity of the more developed countries to help the underdeveloped economies of East Asia. At the same time world tensions force the countries of East Asia to spend a disproportionate amount of their budget for defence and thus reduce the resources available for social development.

(3) The relatively large emphasis upon military power to defeat Communism, which is one of the important results of increasing international tension, involves in itself a threat to movements of national freedom and social justice. Military power has value mainly as a means of giving nations time to achieve positive democratic and responsible social change. This, however, tends to be overlooked in the increasing tensions of the world situation.

These considerations necessarily condition the attitude of Asian peoples to big power politics, their approach to the United Nations and to the efforts for peace. The absolute social necessity to reduce world tension to the minimum and to do everything possible to maintain even an unstable peace has led the Asian nations to adopt a more or less neutral or independent position regarding big power politics.

In order to provide an international basis for bringing into being the welfare state in East Asia, the idea of the Third Force has popular appeal.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, at Lucknow, some Asian Christians were actually and openly criticising the American anti-communist foreign policy and expressing sympathetic understanding of the necessity of creating a third force, or a third political bloc, as a means of easing world tension and ensuring peace and economic progress in the new nations of East Asia. To them, the political issues at that time, such as the communist insurrections in Malaya and Indo-China, were primarily the struggles of the Asian peoples for "self-determination" — "Christians in East Asia are bound to support the genuine movement of national freedom and social justice."

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, pp. 29-30.

The colonial powers were urged to "recognise unequivocally the right of these nations to self-determination and to set up machinery for the transfer of power satisfactory to the democratic conscience of Asian peoples and within the structure of international law".<sup>1</sup>

The report also touched upon two specific issues of international tension of that time. On the Korean War: "The necessity for continuing to seek a negotiated peace and to contain the conflict needs to be stressed." And on the India-Pakistan tensions:

These "are sapping the moral and material resources of both countries and adversely affect social policies. Christians have the obligation to give a proper perspective and guiding lines in facing these problems and easing the tensions."<sup>2</sup>

But, at Lucknow, one other significant understanding found in the report of this group was the idea of treating the churches and Christians in the world as the "spiritual reality" of the "Third Force". They explained:

Even though the third force is not a political reality in the present situation, it is a spiritual reality throughout the world wherever the Church is providing its members with the basis for spiritual freedom against ideological politics and for making prophetic judgments on national and international issues. That is to say, that Christians have in the Church a basis for making decisions on any issue in terms of principle without antecedent commitment to either party in the conflict.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly, then, some Asian Christians at Lucknow were not interested in an ideological or military approach to the many problems and tensions being created by the conflict between communists and anti-communists in East Asia and in the world. It could be argued that they were in fact urging their fellow-Asians and Asian Christians to search for alternative solutions nearly three years ahead of what the Asian and African politicians were to attempt to say at the Bandung Conference. This particular

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, pp. 30-31.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 30.

report must be regarded as one important Asian Christian response to the grave political situations existing in East Asia and in the world of that time. The war in Korea was still raging and communist insurrections were reported in many Asian countries. But here at Lucknow there were some Asian Christians who had no fear about this spreading influence of communism, for they claimed to have a new and deeper understanding of the problem and were, indeed, prepared to regard it as an opportunity for Christian social witness, if not a "partial preparation" for the Gospel! As D.G. Moses, observing the communist influence in India, said:

The Church has a wonderful opportunity in the very spread of communism in India and other lands. Now is the time for the Church to witness to its faith in the Lord of history and the meaningfulness of life. Hinduism has never had a belief in history as subject to the Righteous Will of God ... The coming of Communism has opened their eyes to the relevance of the historical ... In a sense we can say Communism is a partial PREPARATIO EVANGELICA, at least making it possible for the Hindu to understand the Christian faith in a historical revelation.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, some of the contributors to the book edited by Manikam expressed their confidence that the growth of communism in Asia would be checked by several forces, in particular "the opposition of nationalism", "a strong dislike for Communist violence", and "a wide-spread antipathy to Communist atheism".<sup>2</sup> They urged the churches in the West and their missionaries in Asia "to understand and appreciate the positive aims of the social revolution".<sup>3</sup>

Those Asian Christians who were advocating a positive understanding and approach to the spreading influence of communism must have felt justified in their belief after hearing the report from Bishop K.H. Ting, who came from China to attend as an observer at a WCC Central Committee

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 12.

2. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 81.

3. Ibid., pp. 107-109.

meeting in 1956. Even before that, Manikam had been invited by the Chinese churches to visit China, and found, apparently, little to complain about in what he saw there. In his report to the Central Committee, he said "the Church enjoyed freedom of worship" and the YMCA, YWCA and theological institutions were still functioning; the churches, he also noted, were working in close co-operation and were self-supporting, self-administrating and self-propagating. He only questioned whether they would speak out against the government.<sup>1</sup>

In his address to the WCC Central Committee meeting, Bishop Ting said that the Chinese churches had been learning under a communist government "dependence on the sufficiency of Christ", "the love among the brethren", and "the love for their people". He claimed that "the rights of Chinese citizens to enjoy freedom of religion were guaranteed by the National Constitution". But he also said:

Christians in China did not pretend to agree with communists in their views on matters of faith. However, this does not prevent Chinese Christians from recognising the value of many important good things the People's Government was doing for the people. They were humbled and gave thanks to God for this.

.....  
Chinese Christians did not think of it [the communist takeover of China] as an act of God's wrath but as an act of God's love — the God who loved China no less than He loved any other people.<sup>2</sup>

(b) Resurgent religions — the need for Christian appreciation and understanding

If some Asian Christians were gradually becoming less fearful about communism and in fact coming to regard it as a challenge to Christian social witness, there was also a similar attitude developing about

---

1. WCC, Minutes and Reports of the Ninth Meeting of the Central Committee, Galyateto, Hungary, July 28-August 5, 1956 (Geneva: WCC), p. 55.

2. Ibid., pp. 55-57.

the resurgence of Asian religions. For example, Paul Devanandan, while recognising the fact of the resurgence, certainly did not appear to regard it as a threat to or "in violent conflict" with Christianity. At Bangkok in 1949 he had been invited to give an important address on the relation between the gospel and the resurgent cultural heritage in East Asia. He considered that "points of contact" between the two could be found, and urged:

We are now entering a new cultural era, where the focus of thought is centered on new values. The church must heed the voice of Him who saith: "Behold, I make things new." We must look forward, then, with courage and hope to the new opportunities, not backward with disappointment and distress ... In the new opportunities we will discover ... that we are workers together with God and the people of our own culture and other cultures in the establishment of God's dominion on earth.<sup>1</sup>

In Manikam's book, Devanandan stated his views even more clearly: "In ALL religious revival God is somehow at work;"<sup>2</sup> the resurgence was "in every case a new evangelistic opportunity for a face-to-face meeting of the credal claims of the Christian Gospel and their foundational doctrines."<sup>3</sup> To Devanandan, the resurgence was an opportunity for evangelism and dialogue.

In the same book, J.R. Chandran, Principal of Bangalore Theological College, India, also stated the view that "points of contact" could be observed among different religious doctrines:<sup>4</sup>

All that is precious in every religion will find a place in the Christian life. It is true that everything has to be redeemed and transformed by Christ in order to be made part of the Christian religion. What causes offence, however, is not always the claims of Christ, but the lack of sufficient appreciation and respect among Christians for the non-Christian religions ... More systematic and organised efforts should be made to baptize the precious elements of non-Christian religions and cultures for the use of the Christian Church. The treasures

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 75 and 77.

2. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 137.

3. Ibid., p. 121.

4. Ibid., p. 199.



of all nations should be brought to the feet of Christ, and this is one way of bringing Christ to all nations.<sup>1</sup>

At the WCC Evanston Assembly, M.M. Thomas attempted to do his part in dispelling the fear of resurgent religions. In an address to the accredited visitors of the Assembly, he claimed that Indian Christians, though constituting only about two per cent of the total population,

... resisted successfully the temptation "to follow the path of fear of the non-Christian majority and to become exclusive and narrow and seek special safeguards for the Christian community as a minority in the nation", because they considered that attitude "both unChristian and unwise". They had chosen, he said, to work with non-Christians "for the good of the whole nation and for justice for man as man, and not to be an exclusive community concerned with its own rights ....

"It was this attitude," he explained, "that led the Christian community in India to give up voluntarily all special minority rights of communal representation they were offered, and to ask to be considered citizens without any special protective safeguards, along with the rest of the people ....

"If the Christian faith has a more realistic understanding of man and society, as we do believe, it must express itself in the insights Christians as citizens bring to the common pool in the ... struggle of a responsible society where human freedom and social justice are real."<sup>2</sup>

Thus Thomas was actually advocating that instead of treating other religions as threats, Asian Christians should join forces with them in the common struggle for freedom and social justice and for the building up of an integrated nation in each of their countries.

### 3. The Call for Christian Participation in National Life

J.W. Decker has noted that before the Second World War came to an end Indian and Chinese National Christian Councils had already started making plans towards restructuring their churches and institutions for

---

1. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, pp. 208-209.

2. David P. Gaines, The World Council of Churches: A Study of its Background and History (Peterborough, New Hampshire: Richard R. Smith Co. Inc., 1966), pp. 738-739.



the task of mission in the post-war era. He noted in their plans "the upsurge of nationalistic feeling which puts the Church as 'native' ... over against the mission as 'foreign'", and commented, "But nationalism must be recognised as almost the poorest of arguments for a Church which by its deepest nature is oecumenical."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, noting the prevailing tide of nationalism in East Asia after the war, Stephen Neill observed, "This nationalism is a new thing. It is not so much a reasoned conviction as a passion, even a neurosis. It has grown up in conscious opposition to Europe and its might." He said, "[A Christian] can never be merely a nationalist. He knows and feels himself to be a member of the worldwide Church."<sup>2</sup> Here Decker and Neill are taken as examples of some world ecumenical leaders of the time who somehow could not bear the fact that the Asian Christians were going to make their churches, as Bishop Ting told the WCC Central Committee in 1956, "as national as the Church in England, for instance, was English".<sup>3</sup> Such anxiety about the influence of contemporary nationalistic feelings on the Asian churches and Christians was still making itself clearly heard even as late as 1958 at a European Ecumenical Consultation held at Odense, Denmark. The Consultation urged European Christians to be sympathetic to the real aims of nationalism in Asia and Africa but added the qualification, "even though they [European Christians] may feel it necessary to point out the dangers to international cooperation of even constructive nationalism".<sup>4</sup> It will be seen in the next chapter that such anxiety

---

1. J.W. Decker, "China and India Look Ahead," IRM 35 (1946), p. 134.

2. Stephen Neill, The Cross Over Asia, pp. 16 and 151.

3. WCC, Central Committee 9th Meeting Minutes, p. 57.

4. Department on Church and Society, WCC, The Specific European Responsibilities in Relation to Africa and Asia, report from a European ecumenical consultation held at Odense, Denmark, August 8-11, 1958, p. 7.

and reluctance to accept the necessity of Asian Christians' search for the selfhood of their churches and nations, and of East Asia as a region, was not a small delaying factor in the process of establishing the EACC and indeed, in the whole restructuring of the relationship between the "Younger" and the "Older" Churches and world confessional organisations in the 1960s. Meanwhile, however, there were Asian Christians who were not deterred by such fears and were determined to find their role in the national life of their nations.

(a) The need for identification

Early in 1946 Chandran Devanesen, then a member of the Indian NCC Secretariat, appealed to Indian Christians to participate in the task of establishing India's nationhood and not to leave it to the communists (who were then gaining some influence in the country). In his view, then, the first need was "an Indian theology with a dynamic conception of the Church, a Church that can enter fully into India's history and participate in her national destiny". And the second need,

if such a view of the Church is to have real meaning, if it is really to take root in the soil, is to make it self-supporting, for only self-support can bring real responsibility and acceptance. The development of such a Church will symbolize the coming of age of the Christian community in India. Then the Christian's spiritual life will be relevant to the Christian's participation in the destiny of his country.<sup>1</sup>

Asian Christians like Devanesen knew full well that at a time when nationalism and communism were exerting their greatest attraction upon the Asian peoples, there was a temptation for Asian Christians "to think primarily as nationalists or communists and only secondarily as Christians".<sup>2</sup> But they also knew, for example in the report from Ceylon

---

1. Chandran Devanesen, "Christians and India's National Destiny," IRM 35 (1946), pp. 146 and 149.

2. Chandran Devanesen, "Post-Amsterdam Thoughts from a Younger Church," ER 1, No. 2 (Winter 1949), p. 144.

presented at the Bangkok Conference of 1949, that the churches in East Asia were being looked upon by many of their fellow-Asians "largely as something alien to the country".<sup>1</sup> Manikam also observed:

The long period of colonial rule over many of the East Asian countries, and the association of Christianity with the Western powers, have made the Christian religion appear to the non-Christian Asian as an appendage of Western sovereignty and civilization. Asian Christians were looked upon with suspicion.<sup>2</sup>

This suspicion was further deepened when some Christians were found to be involved in certain rebellions against the newly independent governments — for example in Indonesia, Burma and the Naga State of India.

Manikam's comment was: "To the ancient world, the offence of Christianity was the Cross: today in East Asia the offence is the Church."<sup>3</sup>

Certainly, Christians in the West should have known that Asian Christians had to face the inescapable task of demonstrating by words and deeds to their fellow-Asians that Christianity was not "foreign", that the churches were not appendages of the Western powers, and that they were also citizens of the new nation. Neill himself also observed the feelings among the Indian Christians in the early years of their independence:

Now all that is changed. Britain is no longer the ruling power, and the Indian Christian claims to be recognised as being fully a citizen of India, no less than the Hindu and the Sikh ... Today in India, the Gospel has been set free from embarrassing and irrelevant associations. It can shine by its own light.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, finding themselves in the current of nationalism and in their search for a positive understanding and approach to the problems of communism, international tensions and resurgent religions, some Asian Christians were gradually led to understand anew their identity and obligations as citizens of their new nations. Their call for Christian

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 15.

2. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 215.

3. Ibid., p. 216.

4. S. Neill, The Cross Over Asia, p. 144.

participation in the struggles for social justice and in the search for new political and social structures for the new nations was a call to all Asian Christians to be actively involved in the total national life of their nations. As early as the Bangkok Conference of 1949, Asian Christians were told that "no fear of 'politics', no fear of consequences can excuse silence" in the revolutionary situations of East Asia. But they were also reminded at the same time that "it is, of course, not the task of the Church as such to enter into the arena of party politics or to pronounce judgment on the technical aspects of government and society."<sup>1</sup>

However, at the Lucknow conference one great step forward from this position was taken. There, some Asian Christians not only declared that in order to remove social injustices changes in the structure of society were necessary, but also granted that such changes

... can be effected mainly through political action. Therefore they Christians must be prepared to accept the necessity of political action as a means of promoting social justice ... It is only as Christians are able to enter into the field of collective political and social action that the Church will be able to exercise its prophetic ministry.

Nevertheless, they still maintained that "under no circumstances should Christians organise themselves into religious political parties".<sup>2</sup>

(b) The first Asian Christian social involvements

Thus, at Lucknow, some Asian Christians were given the opportunity for the first time since the War to speak together on a number of specific national and regional issues in East Asia. Apart from expressing a significant understanding on the problems of communism and international tensions,<sup>3</sup> they also delivered a definition of what a

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 114-115.

2. Lucknow 1952 Report, pp. 31-32.

3. V. supra, pp. 64 ff.

"Responsible Society" ought to be in East Asia:

For us ... a society is responsible where —

- (1) social justice is actively promoted,
- (2) full development of natural resources is pursued,
- (3) the fullest share possible of the national wealth is guaranteed to all,
- (4) human rights and freedoms are effectively guaranteed,
- (5) the people have full sovereignty for their own affairs,
- (6) the principles of social and political life are in accordance with the concept of man as a person called to responsible existence in community.<sup>1</sup>

Turning to economic issues, they wanted foreign aid, but this "should come with no political strings and with sensitivity to the economic and social goals of Asian peoples". "People in industrial countries must realize that their economic assistance to the underdeveloped countries on an adequate scale is a matter of justice."<sup>2</sup> They held that, since the majority of the Asian people lived by the land, "this pressure needs to be reduced by a planned programme of industrialization if there is to be a balanced development between agriculture and industry, and to improve the standards of living." "The countries of East Asia," they claimed, "are committed to the idea of the social planning state," and "basic and certain key industries must be nationalised." The problems of over-population and promotion of family planning were recognised as questions "of vital importance to the Church". However, "for lack of time it was impossible to go into the many complex aspects of this issue"! But further "ecumenical study and action" were recommended.<sup>3</sup>

The Lucknow Conference also dealt with the problem of the caste, class and racial tensions existing in some Asian countries, including Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The "imperative duty" of the Church was to relieve these tensions by working for greater equality and economic justice for all peoples and "by mediating between alienated or

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 31.

2. Ibid., p. 28.

3. Ibid., pp. 28-29.

hostile groups". It viewed "the fear in certain quarters in the western world that the countries of Asia might form a bloc in opposition to the west" as one "without foundation"; the Asian peoples "were not a homogeneous group and had no clearly defined political objectives, although there was a certain similarity in the political situation within these countries owing to their recent achievement of independence".<sup>1</sup>

Undeniably, at Lucknow, an attempt was made to get Asian Christians to be actually involved in some specific contemporary issues. It was the first attempt. Inevitably, their understanding of and judgement on some of these issues were too general. They did not lack foresight, however, for issues such as economic aid, the question of a balanced development programme and the problem of rapid population growth, have all become since then central issues in the whole matter of world development. On the other hand, economists such as Kirby or Myrdal, or UNCTAD and the Pearson Commission, could doubtless point out as typical of that time the over-emphasis on industrialisation, the unrealistic hopes placed on economic aid, and the mere lip-service paid to the serious problem of population growth. But on the questions of communism, international tensions, and the Church as the spiritual reality of the Third Force, some Asian Christians did bring out a number of significant insights and solutions and a new understanding.<sup>2</sup> However, they responded too vaguely and generally to the violence of the Korean War and the growing hostility between India and Pakistan.<sup>3</sup> Evidently, this was due to the fact that some Christians had identified themselves too closely with the ideological policies of their respective governments, so that

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, pp. 33-34.

2. Supra, pp. 66-67.

3. Supra, p. 66.



subsequently they were restricted from speaking more critically and specifically about these two particular issues. As described earlier, the fact that the report on "The Responsible Society in East Asia in Light of the World Situation" was not regarded by the delegates as a statement unanimously accepted throughout by the Conference had demonstrated this limitation quite clearly.<sup>1</sup> It was also a reflection of the correct observation that Asian nations then could not form into a third world political bloc. Thus the significant idea of taking the churches and Christians as the "spiritual reality" of the Third Force which can make "prophetic judgments on national and international issues ... without antecedent commitment to either party in the conflict" was indeed still very much more an idea than a reality. Further, the foreign policy of neutralism and non-alignment adopted at the time by some Asian nations, such as India, Indonesia and Burma, was received at Lucknow without criticism. Undeniably, as was shown in Section I, this policy was needed to defend the freedom of the Asian nations and world peace. But the concept of neutralism could too easily lead to an indifference to the evils which might exist in the political systems of nations, and no Christian could ignore these evils or be "neutral" about them. Therefore, Asian Christians at Lucknow were right in recognising that all these limitations had demonstrated the "need for the churches in East Asia to develop a social doctrine which will provide right criteria for making political judgements and decisions in the East Asian situation, on the basis of Christian faith".<sup>2</sup> However, the Lucknow Conference was the first concrete expression of a new Asian Christian emphasis on social involvement, along with a new idea of Christian social and political action. This new emphasis, together with the issues touched on at the

---

1. Supra, p. 64.

2. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 32.

Conference, were to become some of the central concerns of the EACC in the 1960s.

The basic thinking of the Lucknow Conference was repeated in Manikam's book, though some issues were dealt with in more detail. There was a better recognition of certain serious problems — "the grinding poverty of Asia" and "the pressure of population" — and a new emphasis on the importance of "schemes of international co-operation" such as the Colombo Plan and the ECAFE, in Asian economic development efforts.<sup>1</sup> Some writers still regarded neutralism as an appropriate attitude for Asian nations. They denied that it was a "selfish neutralism, indifferent to the moral issues involved" in world power politics, and argued that a neutral policy might contribute to world peace and enable Asian nations to mediate between the opposing powers.<sup>2</sup>

The next attempt to get Asian Christians involved in national life was the Asian Christian Study Conference held at Siantar, North Sumatra, in 1957, just prior to the formation of the EACC, and attended by more than thirty delegates from different Asian countries. The principles governing Asian Christian social involvement were further broadened at Siantar, for this conference held that "the actual form of political participation may not only vary from one country to another, but also be determined by conditions prevailing in each — for instance, the need of a separate Christian political party is generally admitted in Indonesia at this moment."<sup>3</sup>

The Siantar Conference showed a more realistic understanding of the requirements of a "Responsible Society" than had been the case at

---

1. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, pp. 27-29, 38-40.

2. Ibid., p. 24.

3. The National Council of Churches of Indonesia and the WCC, The Social Goals of New Asia, report of an Asian Christian Study Conference held at Pematang Siantar, North Sumatra, Indonesia, March 12-16, 1957 (n.p. St. Joseph Press, 1957), p. 19.

Lucknow. While "democratic polity" was regarded as coming "closest to the fulfilment of the Christian ideal of man's organised life in society", the delegates admitted that "in abnormal political circumstances some modification of the democratic mode of government may be justified". But the delegates also insisted that "a democratic order" must be the ultimate form of government. The conference favoured the "Secular or Neutral State ... one which does not identify itself with any one particular religion". The state "should have equal regard for the equal freedom of all religions".<sup>1</sup> Neutralism as a foreign policy of Asian nations was again received at Siantar without criticism.<sup>2</sup> The Conference dealt in detail with the issue of international economic co-operation. It recognised that national self-interest was playing a part in the policies of aid-giving and aid-receiving countries alike, but it urged that there must be honesty, integrity and good faith on both sides, so that aid might be used for economic development and a relationship of good will, mutual respect and understanding might develop between all nations.<sup>3</sup> The Conference regarded a higher standard of economic living "as a means of fuller personal fulfilment. Economic progress can enhance the good life provided it does not lose sight of the social and spiritual aspects of it" — "The immediate goal of economic development in many of these Asian countries is to increase production of food and other primary products so as to make up the deficiency and meet the requirement of the growing population."<sup>4</sup> It also recognised that "lasting results in economic development cannot be expected unless the question of the pressure of population is taken into

---

1. Siantar 1957 Report, pp. 13 and 16.

2. Ibid., p. 32.

3. Ibid., pp. 34-36.

4. Ibid., p. 23.

consideration;" but again, no serious discussion took place on the matter and no significant recommendations were made.<sup>1</sup> There was general recognition at Siantar of "the great deal of demoralization and disintegration" in the Asian transitional societies. But, the delegates held, "the situation is not necessarily evil. It is potentially full of creative possibilities of social living at a higher level than the traditional life that was disturbed." They then dealt at some length with new patterns of family and community living in the emerging new Asian societies, emphasising "togetherness", "fulfilment", "social equality", "sense of nationhood", "providing new ties", and the Urban Church as "a source of power which regenerates society, reconciling man with himself, with his neighbour and his God".<sup>2</sup>

Thus, some Asian Christians attempted at Lucknow and Siantar to identify themselves with the needs and aspirations of their new societies and nations, and delivered judgements on some specific social, economic and political issues of the time. In so doing they had demonstrated that Asian Christians must also be citizens of their new nations, who would have to participate in the common struggle for freedom, peace and progress. The pressures of nationalism and current Asian affairs were certainly bearing upon them.

(c) The Lordship of Christ — the development  
of a new theological emphasis

However, in the attempt of Asian Christians to respond to changing situations, a new theological basis for Christian social involvement also began to appear. This was the concept of the Lordship of Christ over

- 
1. Siantar 1957 Report, pp. 26-27.
  2. Ibid., pp. 25-29.

all of life. At Bangkok in 1949, the statement on "The Church in Social and Political Life" began with the words, "The Gospel proclaims that God's sovereignty includes all realms of life."<sup>1</sup> The report of the Indian Ecumenical Study Conference held at Nagpur in October 1952, which was used at the Lucknow Conference as reference material, claimed that "the Christian Hope is rooted in the LORDSHIP OF CHRIST." Its meaning was given as Christ the Lord "OF history", "IN history" and "OVER history".<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, some Asian Christians were not satisfied with the first two statements prepared by the WCC on "Christ — the Hope of the World", the central theme of its second Assembly to be held at Evanston in 1954. These were criticised for presenting a too futuristic view on Christian hope. Devanandan, who was involved in the preparation of these statements, said, "Perhaps this criticism, which still persists, that greater emphasis should be laid on Christian responsibility for action should be given serious thought." In view of the fact that relevance and action were so much emphasised in the resurgence of Asian religions, the Gospel had "to be proclaimed in the lands of the younger churches, so that it is arresting and appealing ... Christian hope, based on the LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST, is a challenge that needs to be made to our generation"<sup>3</sup> (capitals mine). Some contributors to Manikam's book claimed to have found the origin of this new emphasis on social involvement: it was forced, they said, upon Asian Christians not only by the pressure of the revolutionary social changes but also by the growth of a "newer theological movement [referring to the IMC conferences held at Jerusalem in 1928 and at Tambaram in 1938]" on the "LORDSHIP OF CHRIST OVER ALL OF LIFE" (capitals mine). But, rightly, they also

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 114.

2. Lucknow 1952 Report, pp. 50-51.

3. Ibid., pp. 7-8.

observed that this "new interpretation on the Lordship of Christ" as the theological basis for Christian social involvement was "still in the process of formation".<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it would take another few years before it became in the EACC one of the main arguments for concrete Christian participation in social, political and economic affairs.

(d) Christian social involvement -- a minority but important view

But this observation is also the conclusion of this investigation into some Asian Christians' search for a positive understanding of the Christian prospect of that time and their call for Christian participation in the national life. This emphasis on social involvement was still very much in its pioneering stage. M.M. Thomas regarded the social statement on "The Church in Social and Political Life", prepared at Bangkok in 1949, as only "a pioneering venture".<sup>2</sup> On the question of how much the Asian Christians were really alert to the necessity of active Christian involvement in society the writers of Manikam's book said:

Very little so far. The great majority of church members have doubtless never heard of the Jerusalem, Tambaram, Bangkok or Lucknow conferences, to speak only of the conferences held on Asian soil. Most pastors and teachers probably are not aware that they dealt with the question of Christian social concern.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, the Siantar Conference was regarded by both Thomas and A.L. Franz of Indonesia, its two Co-Secretaries, as again a "pioneering venture". The conference "dealt with the topics in a too general way", and "the churches in this area are only just getting aware of the relevance of social thought and action to the Church's life and mission in

---

1. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 88.

2. U Kyaw Than (ed.), Toward Kuala Lumpur 1959, Workbook for the Inaugural Assembly, East Asia Christian Conference (n.p., n.d.), Chap. IV, p. 2.

3. Manikam, op. cit., p. 101.



Asia". They would only agree that the conference had "started an Asian process of Christian social thinking".<sup>1</sup>

However, this conclusion was not surprising, for the whole new understanding on social involvement during this period was expressed mainly among some Christians in India. As seen later in this study, the new understanding began to spread and deepen only after EACC came into being. At one time, Christians in Communist China did contribute to the development of this new emphasis. Their "message" presented at the Bangkok Conference, the views expressed by S.C. Leung of Hong Kong, and Bishop Ting's report to the WCC Central Committee in 1956, must all have played a part, even if only a minor part, in ushering in this new line of thought. However, as they were periodically shut away from any contact with the churches outside, their contribution eventually stopped. But the new emphasis was carried forward by certain Indian Christians such as C. Devanesen, P.D. Devanandan, J.R. Chandran, D.G. Moses, M.M. Thomas and the majority of the contributors to Manikam's book. The Lucknow Conference, with its strong emphasis on Christian social involvement, was attended mainly by delegates from the Indian sub-continent. The two co-secretaries, Nils Ehrenstrom and Manikam, both admitted:

External factors foiled the efforts to obtain a fully representative and balanced membership; while Asian in spirit and outlook, the gathering turned out to be disproportionately Indian in numbers; on the other hand it counted no delegates from China, Indo-China, Korea, or Thailand.<sup>2</sup>

This domination of thought by Indian Christians can also be mentioned as characteristic of Manikam's book. In his review of it, U Kyaw Than, who was to become the Associate Secretary of the EACC, commented: "It strikes a non-Indian reader that certain chapters, though meant to

---

1. Siantar 1957 Report, pp. 10-11.

2. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. viii.

analyze the whole Asian scene, were written only with reference to India."<sup>1</sup>

However, even if this new line of thought was mainly "Indian" or represented the thinking of a minority only, it must still be regarded as a significant and important contribution from certain Christians of the time to the beginning of a serious questioning on the social implications of the Gospel. Its importance can also be seen in the fact that part of the Lucknow Conference's findings on "The Responsible Society in East Asia in Light of the World Situation" was mentioned specifically in the WCC Evanston Assembly Report, although it had not been accepted at Lucknow as a statement unanimously received.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the WCC Assembly suggested that in the post-Evanston period the WCC should give more attention to the social questions confronting the Asian and African churches. A year later, the world-wide study programme on the "Common Christian Responsibility Towards Areas of Rapid Social Change" was launched.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, tribute must be paid to these Asian Christians who had the courage to raise the question of a new understanding and a new approach to the many problems being posed by the spreading influence of communism, international tensions, nationalism and the resurgent religions. They wanted to search for what was believed to be a more positive Christian response to some of the serious political, cultural and economic problems in this first period of the Asian quests. In the course of that search they had helped to set off the process of Asian Christian social thinking. But the main concern among the majority of Asian Christians

---

1. U Kyaw Than, book-review in ER VII, No. 2 (January 1955), p. 203.

2. The World Council of Churches, The Evanston Report; The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1954 (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1955), pp. 124-126.

3. The Witness of the Churches in the Midst of Social Change, papers for preparatory reading, the Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference, Malaya, May 14-24, 1959 (Kottayan, CMS Press, 1959), pp. 125-126.

in the region then was in fact not this new line of thought at all, but another topic altogether. This was "evangelism".

4. The Urgent and Primary Task of the Church — Evangelism

Evangelism, understood primarily as preaching the Gospel to all men and winning converts to the increase of the membership of the churches, was regarded as the urgent and primary task of the Asian churches by the majority of Asian Christians during the years from the end of the War up to about 1957. This concept of evangelism understands the word in its traditional sense — that is, as the task of mission in its narrow meaning. The new understanding on social involvement, significant and important as it was, was not the dominant thought among the Asian Christians of that time; it was, in any case, generally regarded as a different activity of the Church.

As mentioned earlier, even before the War came to its close the NCCs of India and China had already started planning the task of their churches in the post-war years. However, Decker noted, there were at that time "no violent breaks" in the understanding of the central task of the Church among the Indian and Chinese Christians. In all their plans, "the call to evangelism is clearly sounded". The Indian NCC held, "Never has there been a more opportune time for the Christian Church to bear witness to the revelation of God in Christ," and the Chinese NCC declared, "The first business of the Church is evangelism."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, in the General Synod of the Methodist Church of India and Ceylon which was held in Mysore in February 1946, evangelism was

---

1. J.W. Decker, "China and India Look Ahead," p. 132.

dominant in its deliberations and findings. "We resolve," the Synod declared, "to subordinate all other aims to this prime objective ... to win India and Ceylon for Christ." All Methodist institutions and activities in India and Ceylon were to assist both directly and indirectly in the "evangelistic task of the Church" and every circuit should be organised for "effective evangelism".<sup>1</sup>

(a) "The Unchanged Command of Christ" -- Whitby 1947

The urgency of evangelism was the dominant note at the first post-war IMC meeting at Whitby in July 1947. This conviction that evangelism was the urgent task of the churches was not reached without reference to the rapidly changing revolutionary situations of that time. Indeed, the title of the meeting was "Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World". Margaret Sinclair, who wrote a detailed report of this meeting, noted: "In the context of the discussion of the Church's task to-day, was the coincidence of the Whitby meeting with the peak of political revolution in many of the countries from which the delegates had come." The delegates at Whitby were deeply aware, she observed, of the growing influence of communism; they regarded it as a "rival faith" and one which "provided the Church with a challenge which it could not ignore".<sup>2</sup>

According to Neill, the "younger churches" took a full and equal part in the Whitby meeting, which had not happened at previous ecumenical conferences.<sup>3</sup> If this was the case, the dominant thinking among the

- 
1. J.C. Culshaw, "Developing partnership, findings and recommendations of the General Synod of the Methodist Church of India and Ceylon: 1946," IRM 36 (1947), p. 90.
  2. M. Sinclair, "Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World," pp. 4, 32.
  3. S. Neill, Christian Partnership, p. 13. This book is based on the James Long Lectures of the Church Missionary Society, which were delivered by Neill in 1950.

delegates and in the reports from the younger churches in East Asia certainly appears to have held evangelism to be the main task of the churches in Asia. D.G. Moses and T.C. Chao of China were the two Asian Christian leaders who were each invited to prepare a paper for the meeting on their understanding of the problem of communicating the Gospel in their respective countries. Moses, after surveying the revolutionary situations in India, concluded:

In spite of all the advances in education, in commerce and in industry, in spite of all the political and economic changes that have taken place, the fundamental human nature of man, whether in India or elsewhere, is the same and the fundamental human problem remains the same. Men and women, educated and uneducated, are all faced with the identical problem of how to do the good which they know and to eschew the evil which they hate. This experience of frustration in the moral life, this sense of utter poverty of strength in the inner man to meet the call of the ideal, is eating into the core of their being and reducing them to insignificance in their own eyes. ... The given Word, the Incarnate Word, with its promise of peace to the broken-hearted and triumphant life to the defeated, is still the one remedy.<sup>1</sup>

To Moses, in other words, social betterment and improved economic conditions were incapable of meeting the fundamental needs of man. The task of the Church was to present the Gospel in such a way that it could meet "the fundamental human problem" which was found, as he attempted to show, in the heart of man. On the other hand, T.C. Chao saw a rapidly disintegrating process in the Chinese traditional society of the post-war years. He argued that while the Chinese people were traditionally not deeply interested in metaphysics, what they needed most then was in fact "a metaphysical foundation, for a new faith". He believed the transcendence and the contemporariness of the Christian Gospel could meet the exact needs of the Chinese people. Chao, however, did not belittle the importance of Christian social witness, for he also said that Christians like the prophets of old "must go out against corruption, bondage,

---

1. D.G. Moses, "The Articulate Word -- the problem of communication," IRM 36 (1947), pp. 468, 473.

oppression, inequality, cruelty and slaughter". He tried to dispel the fear that preaching of the Gospel might be prohibited in those areas occupied by the communists, or prevented by the interference of the Nationalist Government of China in other areas: "There may be arrests and imprisonments because the voice speaks ... but, come what may and what must, God has spoken in His Son. What is man that he should keep silent?"<sup>1</sup>

Chao urged Christians to note that "more than two-thirds of China's territory is to-day open to Christian evangelization. There are therefore unprecedented opportunities that may soon pass away if not strategically grasped." The problem facing the Chinese churches then was "not how to communicate the Word to them, but, rather, who are available to do so?" He recognised that the Chinese churches were physically exhausted and at a low spiritual ebb as a result of going through ten years of war, and sounded a warning:

Consequently, before the Word begins to be communicated to the non-Christian it must revitalize the Church herself and "reconvert" her "in this generation". Each Christian, each church member, must be made to realize that his duty is to communicate the Word to the outsider, the non-Christian. When church members cease to evangelize, the Church cannot in the true sense of the term, begin to evangelize.<sup>2</sup>

Thus "evangelization", which for Chao evidently meant not only proclaiming the Gospel but also speaking out against injustice in society, was the urgent task of the churches in China then. Christians were "inside the fold", and the task of the Church was "to evangelize" those non-Christians "outside the fold" so that they might be converted and led "inside the fold".

In their reports to the Whitby meeting, Kwan Sik Kim of South Korea, W.Y. Chen of China and Rajah Manikam all spoke of the urgency of

---

1. T.C. Chao, "The Articulate Word — the problem of communication," IRM 36 (1947), pp. 484, 488-489.

2. Ibid., pp. 485-486.



evangelism in their respective countries and the necessity of close co-operation of all Christian forces in each country and in the world in carrying out this urgent task.

Kim reported, "All denominations are agreed that the times are ripe for evangelism, and that the Church must not lose this opportunity of presenting the claims of Christ to the newly liberated nation." He claimed:

The reports that come to us show that there is a great opportunity awaiting the sincere preaching of the Word ... The people are looking for some sure word of salvation ... The well-tried methods of sunrise services for spiritual revival, classes for Bible study, personal evangelism and mass revival meetings are followed. The message is the old Gospel of Christ's saving grace, but with the added zest of appealing to the need for moral and spiritual regeneration in the building of a new Korea.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, Kim did observe that there was "a growing conviction that the Church must seek to evangelize every aspect of the nation's life." But he concluded, "Above all we feel that a definite effort must be made to win converts to Christ and His way of life, among business men, industrialists and labour groups."<sup>2</sup> Such understanding of the evangelistic task of the Church among Korean Christians at that time was well reflected by a Korean delegate at Whitby when he said: "There are forty thousand villages in Korea in which the Gospel has yet to be preached; if you will send us forty thousand missionaries, we shall be very pleased."<sup>3</sup>

C.Y. Chen spoke of the urgency of evangelism in China mainly in numerical terms. Firstly, he proudly reported, "the Church in Free China has made great strides in evangelism." Even during wartime there was "a gain in church membership" and "a gain in church giving". In

---

1. Kwan Sik Kim, "The Christian Church in Korea," IRM 36 (1947), p. 132.

2. Ibid., p. 139.

3. Reported by Neill in Christian Partnership, p. 28.

both cases, the increase was "35 per cent".<sup>1</sup> Chen then claimed, "In post-war China, the call for evangelism is even stronger and more urgent." He regarded the "Three Year Forward Movement" launched by a NCC assembly soon after the War as the "most significant result of the first national gathering since 1937", for it would be "a movement aiming at a more intensive and also a more comprehensive and concerted effort in evangelism. ... [It was] to proclaim 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth', and to make inroad for the Son of God into every avenue of human relations." Chen lamented the fact that Christians formed only one per cent of the total population; "the unevangelised portion of the nation must be exceedingly large." According to his calculation, given the task of converting every Chinese man and woman into a Christian and bringing them all into the membership of the Chinese churches, it would take at least fifty years "to win China for Christ". He spoke of areas in China as "unoccupied" by Christian workers, and the large part of Chinese hinterland as still remaining "a virgin field for Christian enterprise". He urged, "It is high time for the Church to adopt a new strategy, to launch a Christian offensive for the occupation of the 'whole area' ... on all fronts."<sup>2</sup>

Manikam's understanding of the task and aim of evangelism was very similar to Chen's. In his report he said: "It is staggering to think of the unfinished task. There are vast areas of India which have not been touched at all by the Gospel of Christ. In many parts the Christian message has not been heard even once."<sup>3</sup> He observed that "while South India is fairly well studded with churches, the rest of India has

---

1. W.Y. Chen, "The state of the Church in China," IRM 36 (1947), pp. 146-147.

2. Ibid., pp. 149-150.

3. Rajah B. Manikam, "The effect of the war on the missionary task of the Church in India," IRM 36 (1947), p. 186.

many unoccupied areas", and lamented like Chen that Christians in India formed only two per cent of the total population: "Nearly 98 per cent of our brothers and sisters are still outside the Christian Church."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, at Whitby, evangelism was understood by these Asian delegates as chiefly the proclamation of the Gospel to all parts of Asia, the aim being to convert all men and women to Christ and to increase the membership of the churches in Asia. This, indeed, was the dominant and concluding note at Whitby. In the midst of a "revolutionary world" in which struggles for political independence, the growing influence of communism and the immense task of reconstruction after the War were well noted by the delegates, it was believed that over and above all that Christians might be able to achieve in society, the proclamation of the Gospel was still the primary task of the churches in all parts of the world. This task was regarded as too large for any churches to "go it alone". It could be better fulfilled only in "partnership of obedience" which meant primarily the joining of forces among both the "older" and the "younger churches". Thus the urgency and priority of evangelism and "partnership of obedience" characterised the IMC's first post-war meeting at Whitby. The meeting declared:

Above all earthly circumstances stands unchanged the command of Christ to preach the Gospel to every creature. This command has not yet been fulfilled by the Church. It cannot be fulfilled unless all the forces of all the churches, Older and Younger alike, are gathered in a common loyalty, inspired by a common task and mobilized in a common service. The situation is one of extreme urgency. The time is one of unexampled but almost certainly fleeting opportunity. Every year's delay may mean the closing of doors which may not be opened again till this generation has passed away.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Ibid., p. 187.

2. C.W. Ranson (ed.), Renewal and Advance: Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1948), pp. 174-175.

(b) "Making the Gospel known to every creature" — Bangkok 1949

The formation of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in August 1948 did not alter Asian Christians' conviction on the urgency of evangelism in their lands. Christian unity had been the conviction of the Asian Christians long before the Second World War, and so to them the establishment of the World Council was only a partial fulfilment, for the IMC was not involved in this formation. Asian Christians did not play an important role in the formation of the World Council. Hans Ruedi Weber well observed, "The WCC was merely the bringing together of the two essentially western movements for Life and Work and for Faith and Order."<sup>1</sup> Besides, the World Council was constituted then as a council for independent churches, unlike the IMC which was a council for National Christian Councils. Many of the churches in Asia were still dependent "daughter churches" of the churches in Europe, Britain or America. In this circumstance, many Asian churches could not become full members of the Council. Even when some of them did become qualified to do so, they formed a minority of twenty-three among the total of one hundred and forty-seven at Amsterdam.<sup>2</sup> Devanandan explained at Amsterdam:

There is a vague fear (why not be frank about it?) amongst us of the younger churches that in a World Council we may lose our national identity and cultural uniqueness, being dominated by the sheer weight of your collective strength and cultural homogeneity.

He then rightly stated:

Perhaps this is one reason why we have greater loyalty and affection for the International Missionary Council than for the World Council of Churches at this stage in the progress

---

1. Hans-Ruedi Weber, Asia and the Ecumenical Movement 1895-1961 (London: SCM Press, 1966), pp. 220-221.

2. W.A. Visser't Hooft (ed.), The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: The Official Report, Vol. V (London: SCM Press, 1949), pp. 230-235; see Churches Represented at the Assembly.

of the ecumenical movement. To us it is vital that ecumenical Christianity be both international and missionary.<sup>1</sup>

Both Devanandan and Weber observed that Asian Christians were more attached to the IMC than to the WCC, so it was not surprising that the Bangkok Conference in 1949 followed further the understanding of evangelism which came out at the IMC meeting at Whitby. It was almost three years after the Whitby meeting, but to the Christians the evangelistic task of their churches remained urgent and primary, if not more so. But the Whitby meeting was an international meeting, held thousands of miles away from Asia. At Bangkok, on Asian soil, Asian Christians were provided for the first time since the war with an opportunity of their own to speak together about the meaning of the evangelistic task of the Church in East Asia and the way to achieve it.

As this chapter has already shown, at Bangkok there was a clear recognition of the revolutionary situations existing in East Asia. There was a search for positive understanding, and subsequently a new call for Christian social witness; but on the whole these situations were regarded as creating a gloomy prospect for Christian advance. So it was that, at the end of the deliberations, the proclamation of the Gospel was still felt to be the primary and urgent task of the Asian churches. In the minds of many delegates and in the reports, the Christian answer to all the "grave perils" in East Asia was the proclamation of Christ as Lord, Judge, Saviour and King. The aspirations and needs of the Asian peoples would be met if they could be persuaded to accept Him as such. Indeed, the Conference was constantly reminded by its leaders of the priority of this evangelistic task and the kind of message that should be proclaimed in the current situations in East Asia. These emphases are

---

1. P.D. Devanandan, "The Ecumenical Movement and the Younger Churches," in The Universal Church in God's Design, The Amsterdam Assembly Series, Vol. I (London: SCM Press, 1948), p. 153.

clearly discernible in the addresses given by the Conference speakers.

Manikam repeated very much what he had said at Whitby. He spoke of Asian Christians as a "tiny minority" in the total population of East Asia: "The unfinished task which the church in East Asia faces is stupendous; it is of herculean dimensions."<sup>1</sup> He regarded the situation in the region then as very grave indeed:

The darkest shadow that hovers over our thresholds today is the possibility of another war with its atom bombs. But we have work to do, and the sands of time are running out. We are gathered here to take stock of the situation and plan wisely for the evangelization of East Asia.<sup>2</sup>

Ranson, as mentioned earlier, regarded "religious nationalism" and "militant communism" as two forces which were creating many problems and questions for the churches in East Asia, and he saw the Asian churches as being similar to the Early Churches in finding themselves minority groups set in the midst of a revolutionary situation. Accordingly he urged Asian Christians:

In this situation we must recover and proclaim the apostolic gospel, that given Word, the KERYGMA of the mighty acts of God in the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

That is the Word, given and unvarying, which we are commissioned to preach. ....

If we keep our emphases there, on our apostolic commission, our apostolic message, our apostolic purpose, then all these other questions will fall into their proper place.<sup>3</sup>

Lesslie Newbigin, who had served in South India as a missionary for some years and was then a bishop in the newly united Church of South India, certainly had communism in mind when he repeatedly emphasised in his address to the Conference the eschatological aspect of the Christian message. "In Marxism," he observed, "the standard of judgment is the developing social process itself." He therefore asked:

- 
1. Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 4-5.
  2. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
  3. Ibid., p. 71.



Must we not remind ourselves and all in our churches that our citizenship is in heaven, from whence we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ? Must we not confront this world ... with the truth that it has a Judge ... and a Saviour, who has come and will come again? The time is surely past for us to hurry along in the wake of the social reformer and the world-planner, trying to get him to listen to our assurances that we also are interested in this world. Of course we are interested in this world. But our interest in this world is dictated and governed at every point by our citizenship in another ... It is only as we take seriously that anchorage in eternity that the Church can ride out the storms of time. Without it, the Church is a mere drifting hulk.

Our message is to the people now living, like all human beings, soon to die. It is to tell them of the true dimensions of this brief earthly existence, the dimensions of heaven and hell; of the eternal God who created them and of the eternal glory for which he created them; and of his Son Jesus Christ, by whom he has called them into that eternal glory. It is to invite them to that decision of faith in him by which they are made sharers now in that eternal world; to share with them that hope to which we are begotten again by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead — the hope of his coming again.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, John Mackay reminded the Conference that Christian commitment was a commitment in the person of Christ and not in ideas about Him. He claimed that this was in fact the basic difference between Marxism and the Christian faith: "On the one hand, devotion to an idea of man or class, and, on the other, devotion to people, to seek their good and to relate them to God's great scheme of things." The objective of "redemptive concern" in the task of evangelization was

... the response of personality aflame, a human heart that gives itself in unreserved surrender to the Lord. Such a soul is evangelized. "To evangelize," says a great Anglican document, "is to so present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost, that men shall come to put their trust in God through him, to accept him as their Saviour, and follow him as their King, in the fellowship of his Church." ... To evangelize men is to deliver them from the self-centredness of sin into a God-centered life.<sup>2</sup>

There was no specific definition given at the Bangkok Conference to the goal of evangelism or evangelization; in fact, the two words were often used interchangeably. But in the reports from different countries

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 80-81.

2. Ibid., pp. 108-109.

and in the addresses given by individual speakers it can be discerned that the goal was taken for granted as meaning winning converts to the increase of the membership of the churches. Reports from different NCCs all spoke of their evangelistic achievements mainly in terms of numbers of converts made. For example, the report from Japan spoke of an evangelistic campaign which had "over three thousand meetings with more than one million aggregate attendance and nearly two hundred thousand decisions". Another evangelistic campaign was reported to have had "a total attendance of over forty thousand. More than seven thousand people signed cards indicating their decision to become Christians and join the Church." From Korea there were reported "vigorous evangelistic campaigns", such as "Three Millions for Christ". From Thailand: "The recent evangelistic campaign has resulted in an increase of some forty per cent in church membership."<sup>1</sup> But the understanding which was nearest to a definition can be discerned in the Conference's message to the churches in Asia, where the urgent task of the churches was set forth as "making Christ known in the power of the Holy Spirit that men may come to accept Him as Saviour and King, and to serve Him in the fellowship of His Church".<sup>2</sup>

Asian Christians and their friends gathered at Bangkok certainly accepted literally the meaning of the "Great Commission". In a resolution on the partnership of older and younger churches in East Asia, the Conference declared itself firstly as "humbly reaffirming its loyalty to the command of Christ to preach the gospel to every creature, and deeply conscious of the greatness and urgency of the unfinished Christian task in East Asia".<sup>3</sup> And in its "Message to the Churches of Asia", the

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 36-37, 40, 60.

2. Ibid., p. 121.

3. Ibid., p. 148.

Conference proclaimed:

Amid all the turmoil of the time, we bear witness afresh to the eternal truth of the gospel, the truth that the world has a Lord, a Judge and a Saviour — Jesus Christ. Constrained by his love and directed by his plain command, we declare again that the Gospel is the saving truth for this as for every generation, and we urge upon the churches of Eastern Asia the duty of making the gospel known to every creature.<sup>1</sup>

The Asian Christian response which came out from Bangkok to the "grave peril and great opportunity" in East Asia, then, was not Christian social involvement; the one loud and definite response was evangelization of East Asia, understood primarily as preaching the Gospel and making converts.

The spreading influence of communism and its claim to be fighting for justice for the Asian peoples were undoubtedly one main reason behind this belief in the priority of evangelism. In the same address to the meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, Ranson reported that this was indeed the case at Bangkok. Looking back at the conference, he said:

The answer to Marxism, the ultimate Christian answer, is a theological one. It is a proclamation of the truth that the world has a Lord, a Judge, and a Saviour, Jesus Christ, and that only in the acknowledgment of that Lord, who stands outside and judges history, can human rights ultimately be safeguarded and human justice ultimately be achieved. I think the Bangkok Conference saw that very clearly.<sup>2</sup>

(c) "The Unfinished Task" of making Christians

C. Stanley Smith, who was a former vice-president of the Nanking Theological Seminary in China, and later until 1955 the Principal of Trinity Theological College in Singapore, would certainly have agreed that evangelism was the great need of the time. During the two years

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 120.

2. Ranson, Towards a Christian Strategy in East Asia, p. 12.

1951 to 1952, Smith and S.R. Anderson conducted a survey of theological education in South-east Asia, a survey which helped lay the foundations for the future expansion of theological education in the region. However, it is sufficient to state here that in observing the fact that Christians were small minorities in most South-east Asian countries, Smith indeed thought that the very survival of these communities was at stake. He observed:

It [the Church] is surrounded by a jungle of non-Christian religions with their superstitions and unreasoning fanaticisms. But even more dangerous both to the Christian Church and all religions, are the growing non-, or anti-religious secularist movements, such as Communism. Because of their numerical weakness, many small Christian groups are in grave danger of being wiped out by the jungles of fear and superstitions, fanaticism and secularism. If Christianity is to survive in this area, it must be able to widen its numerical basis. Quality is essential; but quality that can not win a larger quantity of support is in danger of destruction.

He therefore urged:

The major part of the answer is EVANGELISM ... There must also be a great increase and quickening of the forces of evangelism, both among the national churches and the missionaries.

He held that all Christian institutions and church works

... must be inspired and energized by a spirit of evangelism that will, as it seeks to win people to Jesus Christ, also meet the critical need of the churches for a larger basis of membership from which the Church may gain the strength of fellowship in a great crusading movement.<sup>1</sup>

At the Lucknow Conference, however, the urgency and priority of evangelism did not gain the same prominence. Apparently this was due to two main reasons. Firstly, the Lucknow Conference was convened by the WCC as a means to seek Asian Christians' views on the central theme of the coming WCC Assembly. As described earlier, the views expressed at Lucknow by the Asian Christians, of whom a majority were Indians, were

---

1. S.R. Anderson and S. Stanley Smith, The Anderson-Smith Report on Theological Education in Southeast Asia — especially as it relates to the training of Chinese for the Christian ministry — (New York: Board of Founders, Nanking Theological Seminary, 1952(?)), pp. 85-86.

noted not for evangelism but for their new understanding of the necessity for Christian social involvement. Secondly, the Conference did touch on the question of evangelism, but it was overshadowed by the thinking of the two world ecumenical conferences held only a few months before Lucknow; these were the second post-war IMC meeting at Willingen and the Faith and Order Conference at Lund. The main concern at Willingen was the re-examination of the relation between Church, Mission and missions, while at Lund it was about the relation between Mission and Unity. Both conferences were attended by Asian delegates, if not by the same Asian delegates as Weber observed.<sup>1</sup> But some of these delegates, such as D.T. Niles, D.G. Moses, P.D. Devanandan, J.R. Chandran and E.C. Bhatti, were again present at Lucknow. It was, therefore, almost inevitable that the discussion and findings were not on evangelism as such but on the problems and questions of "The Church's Call to Mission and Unity", reflecting the impact of the main concerns of these two world ecumenical conferences upon some Asian Christians and the Lucknow Conference itself. In tune with these two conferences and the emphasis of the Lucknow Conference itself on Christian social involvement, questions began to appear as to whether "evangelism" was just a part of the "mission" of the Church, and that "one of the things that needs urgently to be done is to break the isolation of the Church from its environment."<sup>2</sup> Such questioning was a reflection of one important understanding held at Willingen, that "the nearer the Church draws to its Lord the nearer it draws to the world."<sup>3</sup> But it can also be said that at Lucknow the basic understanding of evangelism as understood at Bangkok was still discernible. For example, in the findings on "The Church's

---

1. Weber, Asia and the Ecumenical Movement, p. 242.

2. Lucknow 1952 Report, pp. 22, 25.

3. The Missionary Obligation of the Church: Willingen, Germany, July 5-17, 1952 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1952), pp. 4-5.



Call to Mission and Unity," it was stated that there were in Asian lands some "young churches composed of those who have themselves been converts to Christianity in which evangelistic fervour is most obvious, and conversions are most numerous". Some Asian Christians were said to be treating "evangelism ... as a specialised Church activity", forgetting that "evangelism is a function of the whole LAOS, the whole people of God".<sup>1</sup> Further, the Asian churches were urged "to fulfill their responsibility for mission in three areas": firstly, "in their own life, ... greater emphasis must be put on the crucial importance of the conversion experience;" secondly, "within her borders ... Each Church must support its own Home Mission;" and thirdly, "outside their borders".<sup>2</sup>

The Central Committee of the WCC which also met at Lucknow acknowledged the revolutionary situations in East Asia. Some of the members and staffs of the Central Committee were present at the study conference, and therefore the emphasis of that conference upon the necessity for Christian involvement in the struggles for social and economic justice in the region would have been conveyed to the whole committee. Indeed, in the Central Committee's "Letter to the Churches in the World Council of Churches" there was a great deal about the "Imperative of Social Justice" and the "Christian Basis of Political Freedom". Christians and churches outside Asia were urged to help the Asian peoples "to attain a standard of living which meets basic human needs, and in their search for a more just social and economic order". But the Committee also believed that this emphasis on social involvement was not enough, for the letter went on to state what Asian Christians as a whole then would readily accept: "Amid elemental hunger, the uprooting of life and the struggle to rebuild,

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 21.

2. Ibid., p. 23.



the fundamental need is still man's need for God."<sup>1</sup>

During the intervening years between the Lucknow Conference and the coming into being of the EACC in 1957, Manikam constantly spoke about the urgency and priority of evangelism. His address at the Evanston Assembly contained the familiar words and sayings which he used to describe the task of evangelization in the region. For example: "the multitudes which inhabit East Asia are today caught in the terrific maelstrom of 'a gigantic revolution' — "gigantic process of revolutionary change in the indigenous culture" — "small minorities amidst vast non-Christian countries" — "proclaiming the transcendent Word of God and being a community of grace in tension with the political, economic and social orders" — "ancient religions have taken on a new lease of life and defy the exclusive claims of Christianity. A militant communism preaches that religion is the opiate of the people and wills to destroy it. Secularism and atheism are gaining ground alongside the revival of ancient religions" — "never heard the Gospel" — "against these tremendous odds" — "the needs of Asia are so overwhelming, the tensions so acute and the human resources of the Churches so meagre".<sup>2</sup>

Manikam was simple, plain and earnest in his understanding of "The Unfinished Task" (another phrase frequently used by him). Appointed since the Bangkok Conference as the Joint East Asia Secretary of the WCC and the IMC, he travelled to all parts of East Asia. As will be described in more detail later, his appointment was to visit and to cultivate a closer fellowship and co-operation among the churches and Christians in the region. Therefore, theoretically, he would have known better than any Asian Christian the real needs of the Asian churches. To him, evangelism understood primarily as proclaiming Christ and winning converts

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 38.

2. Gaines, The World Council of Churches, pp. 735-738.

to the increase of the membership of the churches in East Asia was the main need. This was for him urgent and primary. He could not bear the fact that Asian Christians were minority groups in practically all East Asian countries. He regarded the revolutionary situations in East Asia of his time as grave and consequently the task of evangelization was always seen by him as urgent.

Manikam repeated his conviction in the book which he edited for the reference use of the WCC Evanston Assembly (Christianity and the Asian Revolution) and in another book, The Church in Southeast Asia, jointly written by him and W.A. Thomas in 1956. The latter volume, evidently, was written mainly for American readers and hoped to canvass their help in the evangelistic task in Asia. In the last chapter, entitled again "The Unfinished Task," Manikam and Thomas reminded American Christians of the concern for individual souls among their missionaries of an earlier age. After that, they said:

Western Christians today need to feel again the urgency of evangelism. It is still true that thousands die daily without Christ. What is still more tragic is that millions live without Christ. The evangelization of the world in this generation and every generation is the continuing responsibility of the total world Christian community. Until the acceptance of this responsibility generates a burning passion to proclaim everywhere the good news, we will in effect be denying Christ no less effectively than did Peter during the early morning trial of his Master.

They then made clear their stand on Christian social involvement:

Another driving force in the early missionary movement was an inspired determination to save the world by spreading social justice and peace. This was not, and is not, a substitute for evangelism, but it is an essential part of the Christian approach to a needy world.<sup>1</sup>

While seeking help from outside Asia, Manikam also realised that "the primary responsibility of winning East Asia to Christ must rest on the Asian Churches".<sup>2</sup> In fact, he was happy to report at the Evanston

---

1. Manikam and Thomas, The Church in S.E. Asia, p. 160.

2. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 283; Manikam and Thomas, op. cit., p. 168.

Assembly, "In recent years the Asian churches have become missionary-minded and have sent forth their sons and daughters to other Asian countries as missionaries of the Cross."<sup>1</sup> But he also rightly admitted that all these were "but indications of the awakening of a new interest".<sup>2</sup> There was no missionary movement as such in East Asia then.

Manikam gradually retreated behind the scenes when, in 1956, he became a bishop of his church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South India.

Meanwhile, however, it was not only Manikam who claimed to have recognised that the time had come for the Asian Christians themselves to take up the urgent responsibility of evangelizing East Asia. For example, in an open statement entitled "Asian Churchmen Speak", in Manikam's book, the NCCs of Japan, Malaya and Burma and groups of church leaders in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indo-China, Pakistan, India and Ceylon expressed together this similar conviction. This statement, which was intended to be an open letter addressed to all churches and Christians at the Evanston Assembly, also contains some important views and recommendations regarding the necessity for new strategy, approaches and church relationships in the task of the Church in East Asia. In the concluding section they declared:

The time has come when we of East Asia should regard the evangelization of this part of the world as our primary responsibility. Our sons and daughters should be challenged to go out as missionaries of the Cross, as yours have been. We rejoice that some of ours have already answered such a call, but we need to send out more, and support them better, in obedience to our Lord's Great Commission. You have borne the burden nobly so far; as it now gradually passes over to our shoulders may we be ready to bear it!<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. Gaines, The World Council of Churches, pp. 737-738. This is repeated in Manikam's Christianity and the Asian Revolution (pp. 281-282) and in Thomas and Manikam's The Church in S.E. Asia (pp. 167-168).
  2. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, p. 282.
  3. Ibid., p. 293.

This was the indeed the question facing the Christians in East Asia of that time. To claim such a responsibility is one thing; to be capable of actually carrying it out is another.

Stephen Neill was particularly anxious about this question. He doubted whether the younger churches were really capable of shouldering the responsibility. The younger churches, he felt, were facing many external as well as internal problems: for example: "They have first to safeguard the purity of the Christian faith;" they had a narrow "pietistic tradition", and there was "the spiritual weakness of the Younger Churches".<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he said, "The younger Churches are still very small in relation to the tasks that remain to be undertaken." In India, as converts came mainly from the poor, the ignorant and the outcaste, "the Church has started weighed down with a burden of ignorance and illiteracy within itself" — "in general the level of spiritual life within them [the younger churches] is very low" — "the leadership in the younger Churches is far from adequate to the burdens that rest upon it".<sup>2</sup> He claimed at Whitby that the younger churches had been given their full independence and control of their future. But he went on to quote the question which was presented by some Western churchmen to the younger church leaders at Whitby:

"We recognize that God has laid on them primarily the responsibility for the evangelization of their countries. But now give us blue-prints of how that task is going to be carried out. How are the five million non-Roman Christians in India, mainly concentrated in the South, going to undertake within a measurable time, the evangelization of 350 millions of their fellow-countrymen?" On some of the younger Church leaders this direct challenge had a sobering effect. They had talked in general terms of taking full responsibility; they had not worked out in detail what the cost of taking over full responsibility would be. And when they began to work it out, they found that the answer could only be in terms of continuing partnership, in a new form, between older and younger Churches in obedience to the command of God.<sup>2</sup>

- 
1. Neill, The Cross Over Asia, pp. 28-30.
  2. Neill, Christian Partnership, pp. 24-26.
  3. Ibid., p. 27.

Indeed, at one time, Neill seems to have seriously believed that Asia would need 50,000 foreign missionaries and that these could be sent there at a rate of 5,000 every year for a period of ten years!<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly Neill, who had served in India for many years and was a bishop of the Anglican Church in India, did raise some important issues here. Asian Christians were challenged to demonstrate that they were serious in their declared intention of taking up responsibility for the evangelization of East Asia. They were asked to show their "blue-prints" of how that task was going to be carried out. But Asian Christians were serious about this task, and they did have some "blue-prints". They planned to tackle this by a unity of all Asian Christians and, as Neill also observed, with a new form of partnership with their fellow-Christians outside East Asia.

---

1. Neill, The Cross Over Asia, p. 156.

Chapter Two: THE SEARCH FOR CONCRETE EXPRESSIONS OF ASIAN  
CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY IN EVANGELISM AND UNITY

---

1. The First Attempt

The roots of the EACC can be traced back to the IMC meeting held at Tambaram, India, in 1938. For it was during this meeting that a proposal from the Chinese and Japanese NCCs about the possibility of establishing an office of the IMC in Asia was presented and then remitted to the IMC Committee for fuller consideration.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, however, the Second World War which broke out soon after the Tambaram meeting interrupted the consideration of this proposal.

Two main reasons may be seen as underlying this Asian Christian proposal at Tambaram. One was the Asian Christians' passionate desire for unity in evangelism; and the other lay in the beginning of a gradual mutual discovery among the Asian Christians themselves — a dawning realisation that they were sharing a common calling and identity as Christians and as churches in East Asia.

At Tambaram "it had become quite clear that Asian Christians had definite common convictions and questions".<sup>2</sup> And, among these, it was their conviction and questions about Christian unity that stood out most clearly at the meeting. No delegate at Tambaram could have failed to notice the passionate longing for unity among the delegates from the younger churches who came mainly from Asia. Their conviction was so strong that those of them in the Section on Co-operation and Unity felt

---

1. IMC Ad Interim Committee Meeting Minutes, 1937-1947 (WCC Library, Geneva), p. 51.

2. Weber, Asia and the Ecumenical Movement, p. 281.



it necessary to issue a separate statement in order to bring out clearly their fervent desire for Christian unity. They first reminded the older churches that Christian divisions "were seen in their worst light in the mission field":

... instances ... of disgraceful competition, wasteful overlapping, and of groups and individuals turned away from the Church because of the divisions within. Disunion is both a stumbling block to the faithful and a mockery to those without.

The younger churches, they declared, were

... aware of the fact of spiritual unity; they record with great thankfulness all the signs of co-operation and understanding that are increasingly seen in various directions; but they realize that this is not enough. Visible and organic union must be our goal.

But the great difficulty in their efforts to achieve unity was that

... loyalty ... will forbid the younger churches to go forward to consummate any union unless it receives the wholehearted support and blessing of those through whom these churches have been planted. We are thus often torn between loyalty to our mother churches and loyalty to our ideal of union.

They therefore appealed,

... with all the fervour we possess, to the missionary societies and boards and the responsible authorities of the older churches, to take this matter seriously to heart, to labour with the churches in the mission field to achieve this union, to support and encourage us in all our efforts to put an end to the scandalous effects of our divisions, and to lead us in the path of union.<sup>1</sup>

This statement issued at Tambaram may well be regarded as the first open declaration on the part of the younger churches of their intention to fight together against the disunity, paternalism and confessionalism existing among the churches in their lands. Indeed, D.T. Niles would trace back the origins of the history and purpose of the EACC to the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 — for in Edinburgh, he explained, C.Y. Cheng of China and V.Z. Azariah of India "called on the Churches of the West to recognize three goals as those towards which the

---

1. Tambaram Series, The Life of the Church, Vol. IV (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 402-403.

Churches of Asia must press: "These were defined as partnership in mission, autonomy in government, and unity in life."

The plea from Cheng and Azariah was beyond the immediate purposes for which the Edinburgh Assembly had been called. But Niles observed:

Azariah's famous words "Send us friends" was intended to convey what now is a truism but which at that time was revolution—that it is the Churches of Asia which themselves must decide the nature of their relationships and the forms of their organisation.<sup>1</sup>

One very significant development in the history of the ecumenical movement was also recorded at Tambaram. It happened for the first time in an international ecumenical conference of this nature that delegates from the younger churches "constituted slightly more than half the body of official delegates".<sup>2</sup> This significant development was noted not only among the delegates of the older churches, but also by the younger church delegates themselves. It brought to them a new awareness about their responsibility and identity.

K.S. Latourette rightly observed that in the earlier stage of the ecumenical movement, in the vast territories of Asia, Africa and Latin America where distances were great and modern means of travel were few, the small younger churches lived in isolation from one another. He said:

The younger Churches had been far more closely linked to the sending countries than to one another; connected with centres in the West like the spokes of a wheel, they had had hardly any contact with one another round the rim. Christians in India and China were far better informed respectively about Britain and the United States than they were about one another.<sup>3</sup>

But this situation began to change as more and more delegates from the

- 
1. D.T. Niles, Ideas and Services: A Report of the EACC 1957-1967 (obtainable from NCC, New Zealand, Christchurch, N.Z.), p. 5.
  2. Kenneth Scott Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council" in Ruth Rouse and S.C. Neill (eds.), A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948 (London: SPCK, 1967), p. 369. See list of delegates in Tambaram Series, Addresses and Other Records, Vol. VII (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 181-202.
  3. Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings," p. 400.

younger churches came to the West to attend ecumenical conferences. They met one another for the first time not in Asia but in the West. And as they met, they soon discovered that in spite of their linguistic, racial and cultural differences, they were in fact sharing a common calling and identity as churches and Christians in East Asia. In their relations with the ecumenical movement and the churches and mission boards in the West, they found that they were sharing some common aspirations and problems. Thus, Niles discerned:

Here at Tambaram the Churches of Asia met one another in strength for the first time: and they discovered not only their need of one another, but also their need to forge procedures whereby they could begin a common life together ... At Tambaram, in a dramatic way, the Churches of Asia discovered their own lands, the lands to which they were sent in mission by their Lord.<sup>1</sup>

It was not surprising, therefore, that at Tambaram some Asian delegates expressed their desire for an organisational setup in East Asia as a means not only for fostering closer fellowship and co-operation among the Christian forces in the region but also for a fuller and more responsible participation in the work of the IMC. Undeniably, their passionate longing for unity, their desire for better understanding and new relations between themselves and the older churches in the West, and their mutual discovery as sharing a common identity and calling as "Asian" churches and Christians, were all beginning to draw the Asian Christians closer to one another in Asia. But there was no evidence to show that by this development the Asian Christians and churches were withdrawing themselves from the mainstream of the ecumenical movement or grouping themselves as an Asian IMC bloc in opposition to the IMC in the West. As mentioned earlier and as will be shown later in this chapter, Asian Christian leaders were all along very much attached to the IMC and were attracted by the world ecumenical movement as a whole. They wanted to play a part

---

1. Niles, Ideas and Services, p. 5.

in it and regarded themselves as having some real and diverse contributions to make to it.

The War prevented the Japanese NCC from pursuing further the proposal they had made jointly with the Chinese NCC. However, the Indian NCC took over the initiative and in January 1944 it endorsed the proposal. Decker, then general secretary of the IMC, consulted further with the NCC executives in India and China about this proposal and subsequently it was recommended to him that an interim Regional Committee for East Asia should be established.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, in April and October 1945 respectively, the Chinese and the Indian NCCs adopted a detailed plan for the setting up of this interim Regional Committee. Among the "immediate objectives" assigned to the committee, they wanted it "to begin plans for an East Asia Conference to be held as soon after the conclusion of the war in East Asia as conditions will permit," and "to consult concerning the permanent organisation of the East Asia Regional Committee" (*italics mine*).<sup>2</sup>

As for its "long-term objectives", these reflected very clearly the Asian Christians' growing desire for unity and co-operation in East Asia. As Weber has rightly observed, "the text of this too much disregarded proposal already clearly states the vision and work of the forthcoming EACC."<sup>3</sup> These objectives were envisaged as follows:

1. To promote and give expression to the spirit of Christian unity among the Churches of East Asia.
2. To promote the fellowship and mutual helpfulness among Christians in East Asia through conferences, exchange of delegations and such other measures as may be agreed upon.
3. To promote a sense of the responsibility of the Churches in East Asia for the Christian witness and for the building up of the Churches in this area.
4. To bring to the life of the world church the distinctive contribution of the Churches in East Asia.<sup>4</sup>

---

1. IMC Committee Meeting Minutes, 1937-1947, p. 51.

2. Ibid., p. 46.

3. Weber, Asia and the Ecumenical Movement, pp. 281-282.

4. IMC Committee Meeting Minutes, 1937-1947, p. 47.

In their definition of the "status" of this proposed interim Regional Committee, they also made it very clear that it was to be instituted within the total framework and function of the IMC. There was no question of its being an independent or purely "Asian" one, for:

1. It shall operate in accordance with the constitution of the IMC.
2. It may make recommendation to the IMC.
3. It shall transmit all minutes to the co-operating NCCs and to the IMC.
4. Secretaries of the IMC shall be ex officio members.
5. It is understood that the plan for an East Asia Regional Committee is provisional until it has the approval of the IMC.<sup>1</sup>

Both the Chinese and the Indian NCCs believed the situation called for "early action". They therefore recommended that Manikam and W.Y. Chen be asked to act respectively as correspondent and associate correspondent to seek contacts with other NCCs in the region and "be authorized to convene, and to prepare agenda for the organisation meeting of the Regional Committee".<sup>2</sup>

(a) The fear of fragmentation and narrow Asian nationalism

According to Neill, churchmen in the West had demanded "blue-prints" from the younger churches as evidences of the latter's real intention and ability to shoulder the responsibility of evangelization in their own lands. So here was a concrete attempt by the Chinese and the Indian NCCs to make plans for the task of the Church in East Asia. But unfortunately the reaction from some world ecumenical leaders to this attempt was one of delayed action, suspicion and distrust, for this concrete proposal by the Chinese and Indian NCCs at once aroused anxiety about "regionalism" among the IMC and WCC leadership. A statement on "The Post-War Policy and Organisation of the IMC" became necessary and this was issued by the IMC Committee in 1946.

---

1. IMC Committee Meeting Minutes, 1937-1947, p. 47.

2. Ibid.



In this statement, the IMC Committee noted the proposed Regional Committee's two "immediate objectives" but failed to make reference to any of the "long-term objectives" which were, as mentioned earlier, the increasing concerns and aspirations of a growing number of Asian Christian and church leaders. The Committee then claimed:

Although certain obvious gains attach to this possibility [referring, presumably, to the establishment of the proposed Regional Committee], enough attention does not seem to have been given so far to the bearing of the proposal on the permanent structure of the IMC.<sup>1</sup>

There were already, the Committee pointed out, two IMC secretariats functioning in London and New York as one combined central secretariat; "if a third secretariat centre is established in the Far East" it would be "very doubtful" whether the IMC could still "function as a unity". At this point, it certainly appeared that the Committee had failed to understand completely the "objectives" and the "status" of the proposed Regional Committee as recommended by the Chinese and the Indian NCCs. For clearly, these "objectives" and "status" were not concerned with setting up "a third secretariat centre" of the IMC in East Asia, nor was there any proposal for an office that would have nothing to do with the IMC or other Christian forces in the rest of the world. What the Chinese and the Indian NCCs wanted was a kind of permanent organisational setup — one similar in fact to the structure of the EACC when it came into being in 1957 — so that through it the Christians and churches in East Asia might be brought closer together in unity, fellowship, consultation and co-operation; and by it they might participate even more responsibly and fully in the work of the IMC in East Asia and in the world. However, this statement contains no reference to these aspirations and desires. Instead, the Committee brought into it the question of "the adoption of a REGIONALISM within the Council, grouping certain NCCs and conferences

---

1. IMC Committee Meeting Minutes, 1937-1947, p. 51.



of mission boards within large autonomous areas each served by its own largely independent secretariat and regional committee". It then asked whether this "regionalism" was an alternative to the possibility of having three secretariat centres functioning from London, New York and East Asia. But this was still not the end of the statement. For the Committee then allowed the WCC, which was still in the process of formation, to get involved in this proposal. The statement reads:

At some points in the discussion hitherto it has been assumed that the new (Eastern) office could serve both organisations. This again has obvious attraction but greater precision seems to be called for in regard to the nature of such regional developments in the sphere of both the World Council and IMC.<sup>1</sup>

All the questions asked in this statement cannot hide the fact that the primary concern of the IMC Committee was the preservation of the central status of the IMC's traditional structure. There was some fear or anxiety that the proposed office in East Asia might develop into a divisive grouping, fragmenting the central control and the global status of the IMC which were being sought again in the post-war years. In fact, then, the "long-term objectives" of the proposed Regional Committee for unity, closer fellowship and co-operation, and the building up of the churches in East Asia, failed to win serious consideration or priority in this so-called "Post-War Policy and Organization of the IMC".

Meanwhile the WCC did indeed begin to be interested in the proposal. Very soon, the Joint Committees of the IMC and the WCC resolved to enter into close consultation with each other concerning the establishment of the Eastern office. In their meeting at Buck Hill Falls, U.S.A., in 1947, the Joint Committee approved in principle the establishment of a "Joint Office of the IMC and the WCC".<sup>2</sup> Clearly, the idea of such a

---

1. IMC Committee Meeting Minutes, 1937-1947, p. 52.

2. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 1.

"Joint Office" was a creation of the Joint Committee. It was contrary to what the Chinese and the Indian NCCs originally proposed — an East Asia Regional Committee of the IMC and the establishment of its permanent office in East Asia. However, the Joint Committee recommended that their proposal be further considered by the Asian delegates and IMC and WCC representatives who were coming to attend the IMC meeting at Whitby.

Both Neill and Weber claimed the Asian delegates at Whitby "showed little enthusiasm" for the proposal. Neill said:

"Why," they seemed to be saying, "should East Asians be treated as a special class of human beings, requiring a separate office, of a kind not needed by other Christian peoples? Would this result in some kind of segregation, and cut them off from direct contact with the great centres of the oecumenical work in the West? Would the East Asia Office be merely a useless addition to the already cumbrous processes of international Christian work?" ... For the moment, the Asian delegates asserted that what they wanted immediately was not an office, but a conference, in which representatives from all the Churches in East Asia could meet at leisure and talk out all their common problems.<sup>1</sup>

Neill was right that they only "seemed" to be saying this. For looking at the minutes of this particular meeting at Whitby, the Asian delegates do not in fact appear to have shown "little enthusiasm" — although they might well have been less than enthusiastic, knowing that the idea of a "Joint Office" did not come from them. On the contrary, they did in effect endorse the "immediate objectives" of the proposed Regional Committee, for they resolved that "preliminary steps should be taken immediately to plan for an East Asia Conference whereby representatives of the churches can share their experience and concern, join in the life of the ecumenical Church". They recommended to the IMC and the WCC the appointment of a Joint Commission with, among others, the following functions assigned to it:

To begin plans for an East Asia Conference to be held at the end of 1948 or early in 1949;

---

1. Weber, Asia and the Ecumenical Movement, p. 282; Neill, The Cross Over Asia, p. 31.

and:

... to consult them concerning the possibility of establishing a joint office of the IMC and the WCC in East Asia, giving careful consideration to the relationship of that office to the existing NCCs and member churches of the WCC, and to the other offices of IMC and the WCC.<sup>1</sup>

If the delegates had "showed little enthusiasm", they would not have regarded this matter as so important and urgent that "immediate" steps should be taken to convene the regional conference and to seek the opinions of as many Asian churches and NCCs as possible. Neither could it be said that only the delegates at Whitby were concerned to see that the existing link between Asian churches and the IMC and the WCC in the West must be maintained and further developed. As described earlier, the proposal as recommended by the Chinese and the Indian NCCs in 1945 wanted the same. Neill was wrong too in saying that the delegates at Whitby did not want an office but only a conference. The minutes of the meeting clearly show that one of the functions of the Joint Commission was to convene the regional conference so that Asian church leaders could be consulted "concerning the possibility of establishing a joint office of the IMC and the WCC in East Asia". Besides, it was evident that the delegates at Whitby could not decide for their churches and NCCs in this important matter. Therefore, their proposal for a regional conference to be held was an appropriate one.

But alas, before the regional conference could be convened eventually at Bangkok in December 1949, the question of whether the proposed office in East Asia should be a permanent and administrative or merely a mobile and pastoral one was almost pre-decided at the meeting of the Joint Commission held at Manila in February 1948. At this meeting, both the Chinese and the Indian NCCs still wanted an "office", of a permanent and administrative kind. S.C. Leung reported that the Chinese NCC

---

1. IMC Committee Meeting Minutes, 1937-1947, p. 31.

proposed "that a Joint Office of the IMC and WCC be established in East Asia and that China be considered for the location of this office", and that "if possible, two secretaries should be appointed for the Joint Office, someone from the Orient and the other might be non-Oriental". Leung told the meeting that the Chinese NCC also invited the Joint Commission to hold the regional conference in their scenic city of Hangchow. Similarly, Manikam reported for the Indian NCC:

We hope for the institution of the Joint Office at an early date. We feel that the sooner the joint office is established the better it will be. The task of this office should be to strengthen Christian fellowship between the churches of the East in every possible way, by visitation, evangelism, etc.<sup>1</sup>

But these proposals did not meet with the approval of the world ecumenical leaders present at the meeting. Neill clearly stated:

The WCC would view with anxiety the formation of an East Asia Office, if it were the only one of its kind in the world. It would view with suspicion any attempt at segregation of one group of Churches from others. This should be only one of a number of similar offices.<sup>2</sup>

If this was indeed the nature of the WCC's demand for the establishment of an office in East Asia, then the WCC leadership of that time must be regarded as most disappointing, unrealistic and unreasonable. Neill's explanation was clear evidence of the suspicion and distrust felt by the world ecumenical leadership. Besides, what Neill said here did not support what he had said earlier—that at Whitby the Asian delegates themselves feared that such an office might segregate the Asian churches from the IMC and the WCC in the West.<sup>3</sup> What Neill said here, therefore, was at least an honest admission that it was the ecumenical leadership in the West who had this fear and suspicion that the proposed office might

---

1. Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Commission on East Asia of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, Manila, Philippine Republic, February 4, 6 and 7, 1948 (WCC Library, Geneva), pp. 7-9.

2. Ibid., p. 10.

3. Supra, p. 114.

develop into a kind of Asian or racial ecumenical bloc in some sort of opposition to or competition with the IMC and the WCC's global objectives and designs.

Significantly too, at Manila, both Neill and Decker were very concerned that Australia and New Zealand should be included in the area of concern of the Joint Commission. Neill claimed, "Any recommendation to the IMC and the WCC with regard to the Joint Office should include questions such as — Should it include Australia and New Zealand or would it be wiser to plan ultimately for two offices, South Pacific and East Asia?" Decker on the other hand said, "Archbishop Mowll of Sidney had written expressing the opinion that Australia and New Zealand should be so included."<sup>1</sup> But the Asian Christians at Manila proved that they had absolutely no intention of forming an anti-West group. They voted "that the Joint Commission would welcome the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand in the area represented on the Joint Commission."<sup>2</sup> But what was the real intention behind this request that these two countries should be included? Weber correctly observed that it was meant as a test to detect whether Asian Christians intended to group themselves together as an Asian or racial ecumenical bloc.<sup>3</sup> But apart from this, Weber might also have noted that by placing these two countries in the concerns of the Joint Commission, any tendency or development towards an Asian racial bloc might thereby be defused. The same kind of suspicion and distrust on the part of the WCC and IMC leadership were even more explicit in the mid-1950s when some Asian Christians mounted another attempt to find concrete expressions of their solidarity in the region. But meanwhile, at Manila, the recommendation of the Chinese and the Indian NCCs for a

---

1. IMC-WCC Joint Commission Meeting Minutes, Manila, 1948, pp. 11 and 4.

2. Ibid., p. 13.

3. Weber, Asia and the Ecumenical Movement, p. 286.



regional office with administrative responsibility failed to get through the meeting. An alternative recommendation was adopted which reads as follows:

That not later than January 1, 1950, a Joint Eastern Asia Secretariat of the IMC and the WCC be set up for an experimental period of not less than three years. During the experimental period the secretary is not to be concerned with regional departmental administration, but is to give his time to liaison work among the Churches and Christian Councils and also to establishing closer contact than at present exists between the East Asian churches and councils and the world-wide movement of the Church. At the start this Secretariat need not be burdened with a large establishment; the success of the experiment will depend on the secretary being mobile and establishing personal contacts with the churches and councils. The churches and councils of East Asia will desire to bear part of the financial cost of the Eastern Asia Secretariat but in their present financial difficulties it must be recognized that help will be needed from the parent bodies.<sup>1</sup>

So it was that a decision for a mobile and non-administrative one-man Joint East Asia Secretariat was made even before the regional conference was convened. Asian Christians were told that as they could not afford to pay, the financial cost of this office would have to come from their "parent bodies". Therefore, pressures were now put by the "parents" upon the delegates who were coming to attend the regional conference at Bangkok to accept what had already been decided at Manila.

(b) A limited success — Bangkok 1949

At Bangkok, the suspicion of the world ecumenical leadership was laid bare for all to see. In his opening address, Manikam honestly spoke for the IMC and WCC to the Conference:

It was not without hesitation on the part of our parent bodies that this conference was called. They were afraid of regionalism in international movements. They were afraid that nationalist interests might sweep us off our feet, and that we might go off at a tangent, thus doing irreparable harm to the ecumenical movement.

---

1. IMC-WCC Joint Commission Meeting Minutes, Manila, 1948, p. 16.



He urged his fellow Asians: "We must resist this temptation and fight it tooth and nail," and assured the IMC and the WCC leaders present at the meeting:

This conference, though East Asian, is in an ecumenical setting and linked in the strong bonds of ecumenical fellowship. It is rightly OF East Asia and FOR East Asia but it is at the same time OF the ecumenical Church and FOR the ecumenical Church.<sup>1</sup>

But it was only on the seventh day, two days before the close of the Conference, that Ranson took up the task of leading the delegates to accept what had been decided at Manila. In concluding his introductory address, he said, "The two world bodies [IMC and WCC] must give full expression to their unity of purpose and to their ecumenical interdependence, and be ready to move forward unhampered by prejudice or past tradition, as God shows the way."<sup>2</sup> But all this having been said, it could be argued that the IMC and the WCC leadership were very reluctant to help Asian Christians find full expression of their unity of purpose and ecumenical interdependence; for the minutes concerning the establishment of an East Asia office now read:

He [Ranson] referred to the possible dangers of regionalism within the ecumenical movement and the desirability of avoiding the establishment of unnecessary administrative machinery. On the other hand, there may be a creative regionalism which will enrich the ecumenical movement. It is the main task of this conference to find how to give expression to this creative regionalism in East Asia. One important element in it may be the appointment as has been suggested of a representative of the IMC and the WCC for Eastern Asia. Upon this question the advice of the conference is sought. In conclusion, Mr. Ranson expressed his personal hope that, if such an appointment were definitely recommended, it would be conceived in pastoral rather than in administrative terms, and that it would prove to be the means of deepening the sense of Christian solidarity between the churches and councils of East Asia.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Ranson made clear what he himself desired; and the findings of the Manila meeting and the attitudes and feelings of the IMC and WCC

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 5-6.

2. Ibid., p. 142.

3. Ibid., pp. 142-143.

towards the whole development would have been well known by then to the delegates. The IMC and the WCC leaders present at the meeting must have felt extremely pleased with the final outcome of the deliberations (which lasted just one morning, including the time spent on Ranson's address), for the recommendation, which was said to be "unanimously resolved", was very similar to the one adopted at Manila. It asked that a joint secretary be appointed and

... that this person give his full time to visiting the churches and Christian councils in East Asia, helping the churches to share more fully their thought and experience, with a view to strengthening the churches in their evangelistic task in East Asia, and establishing closer contact than at present exists between the East Asian churches and councils and the world-wide movement of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, at the end of the Conference Ranson and Visser't Hooft were happy to report:

The development of "regionalism" within the ecumenical movement might conceivably lead to fragmentation. But the regionalism of Bangkok was not divisive — it was creative. It strengthened the ties which bind the Asian churches to the Universal Church. It will enrich the whole ecumenical fellowship.

.....  
The conference gave firm and unanimous support to the proposal that they [IMC and the WCC] should have a JOINT Secretary in Asia. There was an evident desire to avoid the creation of new ecumenical machinery. This found expression in the emphatic recommendation that the new officer should not build up an "office", but should rather serve as an ecumenical ambassador among the Asian churches, interpreting them to one another, fostering mutual service and effective witness, and strengthening the bonds between the Church in Asia and the Church Universal.<sup>2</sup>

However, that there was really no desire in the minds of the delegates for a kind of permanent and administrative ecumenical machinery or office serving the common needs and aspirations of the churches and councils in the whole region is a questionable assumption. The minutes, for example, do not explain why it was felt necessary for the resolution for a secretary to be read again in the afternoon of the same day "to ensure

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 143.

2. Ibid., p. iv.

thorough understanding"<sup>1</sup>—was it possible that the delegates somehow felt that it was not a satisfactory arrangement? On the last day before the Conference came to a close, the morning "was devoted to a discussion of practical measures whereby greater co-operation among the Churches of East Asia may be achieved". The delegates wanted a news-sheet for the region, interchange of film strips, literature and other visual aids. They wanted interchange of personnel, of theological teachers, writers and journalists and workers in other fields. They agreed with the youth delegates' proposal that "there was a definite need and desire for an ecumenical institute in East Asia, either attached to a college in some country, or functioning through a team of leaders who will move from country to country." Above all, they wanted the Asian churches to help one another in the "greatness and urgency of the unfinished Christian task in East Asia", and a study of the relations between the Asian churches and the missionary boards. They were interested in "a more ecumenical approach to the problem of meeting the missionary needs of certain areas of East Asia, particularly in cases where local churches are unable themselves to assume responsibility for work which can no longer be carried by missionary societies with which they have been associated".<sup>2</sup> All these desires and needs implied that some kind of regional ecumenical machinery or administrative office in East Asia was necessary. These discussions should of course have been brought forward before a decision on the question of an office or a secretary was made; the decision might as a result have been quite different. But apparently, it was thought that all these activities and needs could be organised and co-ordinated between NCCs and between NCCs and the IMC and WCC offices in London and New York and Geneva.

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 145.

2. Ibid., pp. 145-149.

Indeed, Ranson and Visser't Hooft did not even encourage the idea of having a separate news-sheet published in Asia. They wanted all news from Asia to go to the International Review of Mission and the Quarterly Notes of the IMC and the Ecumenical Press Service of the WCC, which were printed and published in London and Geneva, thousands of miles away from East Asia.<sup>1</sup>

It is also significant to note that at Bangkok the question of the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand did not come out until after the resolution for a secretary had been decided. D.D. Chelliah of Malaya proposed that they should be incorporated in the East Asia ecumenical area. But at the end of the discussion, two delegates from Australia and New Zealand decided themselves not to come in but to wait until such time as it was felt that the ecumenical field could be enlarged. J.S. Murray of New Zealand himself admitted: "For purposes of joint planning and conferences, Australia and New Zealand belong to the older churches. Their problems are not the same as those of the present group in East Asia."<sup>2</sup> By this stage, however, no WCC or IMC leader was concerned any longer about their inclusion: had the question of their inclusion become less important in the light of the decision to appoint only a mobile secretary rather than setting up a permanent regional structure?

By and large, it could be maintained that the development of the ecumenical movement and the advancement of Christian unity in evangelism and service in East Asia were set back by about eight years, mainly by the delayed action, suspicion and fear of narrow Asian nationalism and racial ecumenical regionalism on the part of the world ecumenical leadership. It was very unfortunate that the Chinese churches and NCC, who so much wanted an office in East Asia, could not be present at Bangkok. But

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 145.

2. Ibid., p. 149.

even without them, with the leadership provided by the NCCs and churches of India and Japan and other Asian church leaders, and with encouragement from the WCC and the IMC leadership, the Bangkok Conference of 1949 could have been the Prapat Conference of 1957 when the EACC came into being with a permanent, administrative and organisational structure to serve the common needs and aspirations of the churches in the region. There were enough Asian churches and leaders in 1949 who were ready, with their strong desire for unity in evangelism and service, for such a structure. However, at Bangkok no such structure emerged. The urgency and priority of the need for evangelism, felt so strongly at Whitby and Bangkok, failed to inspire the creation of an administrative regional ecumenical structure which could have helped turn it into action. Consequently, many great opportunities for active ecumenical programmes and projects for evangelism, social witness and service during those turbulent years of nationalism, communism, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Bandung Conference, and the initial efforts at social and economic development in many new Asian nations, were lost. The Christian churches in each Asian country were on the whole left alone to do as much as they could with their very limited resources. The sense of urgency and priority concerning evangelism could not be realised fully in the shape of actual programmes in the region.

It must be said, however, that such a conclusion implies no belittlement of Manikam's achievement during the period of his appointment as East Asia Secretary from 1950 to 1956. During those few years Manikam visited practically all the countries in East Asia, including China. He had also to travel to the West to attend IMC and WCC conferences, and to do deputation work in America after the Evanston Assembly. He interpreted to the Asian churches and NCCs the concerns of the IMC and the WCC. He organised a number of "fairly small regional conferences on specific subjects". These were on Christian literatures at Singapore in December



1951; on home and family life at Manila in December 1954; on the use of audio and visual aids at Bangkok in March 1955; and on theological education again at Bangkok (held in co-operation with Stanley Smith and the Nanking Board of Founders) in early 1956.<sup>1</sup> But much more than this could have been achieved if there had been a permanent ecumenical administrative structure in the region. Anyone could have seen that it was quite impossible for Manikam to fulfil all the functions of this post as designated at Bangkok as well as all the other needs and aspirations of the churches and NCCs expressed to him during his travels. While he was able to travel to many parts of East Asia, it is doubtful whether he succeeded in getting much effective work going. Indeed, it was quite unrealistic to believe that by his visits Manikam would be able to bring all the Asian churches and NCCs together in unity and mutual co-operation in actual programmes of evangelism and other kinds of work.

This first attempt, then, on the part of the Asian Christians to search for concrete expressions of their unity and their solidarity in evangelism met with very limited success. Had a more concrete and administrative structure emerged at Bangkok, the ecumenical and Christian advancement in East Asia would have gone ahead far earlier than it did, and Asian Christians and churches would not have needed to wait for another eight years for the establishment of the EACC at Prapat in 1957.

## 2. The Unifying Conviction on Evangelistic Urgency and Unity

Ranson was correct in his report to the Foreign Missions Conference of North America that "there grew out of Bangkok a powerful sense both of

---

1. WCC Central Committee 8th Meeting Minutes and Reports, Davos, Aug. 2-8, 1955, p. 124. See Manikam's reports of his work and visits in Central Committee 5th Meeting Minutes, Lucknow, Dec. 31, 1952-January 8, 1953, pp. 126-132, and 8th Meeting Minutes, Davos 1955, pp. 130-134.



missionary urgency and of ecumenical challenge",<sup>1</sup> for this was indeed the significance of the Bangkok Conference. For the first time since the war, leaders of Asian churches and NCCs came together to look at the Christian task "CONTINENTALLY", as Ranson said.<sup>2</sup> And there at Bangkok they became aware that they were one in Christ and one in the urgent task of evangelising East Asia.

Manikam maintained in his opening address at Bangkok that "the real tie that binds us [Asian Christians] is not so much our Asian cultural heritage as our faith in and a common allegiance to one Lord and Master, our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup> Events at the Conference proved him right. The Bangkok Conference did not issue a statement on its understanding of the "Asian Cultural Heritage", although a drafting committee was assigned to do so and P.D. Devanandan gave a main address on this subject. Instead, the report produced by this committee was combined with the practical suggestions on evangelism which were produced by the drafting committee on evangelism to form one official statement entitled "The Proclamation of the Gospel in Eastern Asia", while the first part of the report on evangelism was then used as the content for "A Message to the Churches of Asia".<sup>4</sup> The Conference came to realise that there was no one cultural heritage but a plurality of cultures in Asia. The joining of the two reports on the Asian Cultural Heritage and on Evangelism into one official statement, Ranson held, showed that the emphasis was thus placed upon the thing that alone united Asian Christians, despite their differences of culture, language, tradition and outlook, and that was "The Proclamation of the Gospel in Eastern Asia".<sup>5</sup>

---

1. Ranson, Towards a Christian Strategy, p. 15.

2. Ibid., p. 9.

3. Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 5.

4. For these events see Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 144-145, 149, 118.

5. Ranson, op. cit., p. 10.

The Bangkok Conference actually issued three official statements. Two have just been mentioned; the third was on "The Church in Social and Political Life". The contents and significance of these three statements have already been mentioned earlier in this chapter. But there was one other significant and important "resolution" adopted by the Conference which could easily be overlooked among the many pages of the Conference report. This resolution, on "The Partnership of the Younger and Older Churches in East Asia",<sup>1</sup> was an Asian Christian response to the principle of "partnership of obedience" which came out at the IMC meeting at Whitby. In this long resolution, the Conference reaffirmed first of all its loyalty to the "Great Commission" — "to preach the Gospel to every creature". It then urged "all the churches, older and younger, and all missionary agencies associated with them, to make a renewed study and full application of the principle of 'partnership'". It called for an "earnest consideration of the place of the missionary in the life of the indigenous church". It hoped for "a more ecumenical approach to the problem of meeting the missionary needs of certain areas of East Asia", and "the possibility of offering to the churches in East Asia a missionary outreach which will enable them to share in organised missionary work in other lands". It welcomed the plans of the IMC for a comprehensive enquiry into the missionary obligation of the Church and the relations between the missionary societies and the older and younger churches. It urged the IMC "to enlist the active participation of younger churchmen in every stage of the study".<sup>2</sup> It was evident that the Asian delegates at Bangkok were serious about this principle of "partnership" and they earnestly hoped some concrete expressions of it might result in the actual missionary enterprise in Asia.

---

1. Bangkok 1949 Report, pp. 148-149.

2. Ibid.

The Bangkok Conference, as mentioned earlier, failed to produce a permanent regional structure in and through which Asian Christians might be regularly brought together from different countries to pursue together their understanding of their faith and actions in a common missionary enterprise. However, Asian Christian participation went on without any interruption in the many conferences and on-going programmes initiated and organised by the IMC and the WCC, mostly outside Asia. Indeed, their presence and thinking came to be felt more and more on these world ecumenical occasions and in their programmes. There was no question of Asian Christians opting out of the world ecumenical movement. After the WCC inaugural assembly was held at Amsterdam, Asian delegates such as Devanesen and Chao all expressed their desire that Asian churches should participate fully in the life and work of the World Council; in fact, they wanted to see more Asian Christians working in the permanent world ecumenical structures in order to reflect the truly international character of the movement.<sup>1</sup> Devanesen held: "The give and take at Amsterdam ... strengthens our conviction that the World Council is the focal point at which the life of the older and younger churches can flow into each other to their mutual enrichment."<sup>2</sup>

Asian Christians' main contribution to the older churches and the world ecumenical movement of that time was their strong conviction of the urgency of the evangelistic task and the unity of the Church. This conviction was embodied, as described earlier, in the separate statement issued by the delegates of the younger churches at Tambaram and the "resolution" as adopted at Bangkok. These two statements set out clearly the conviction and aspiration of many Asian Christians of that time —

---

1. Chao's review of the Assembly, "Amsterdam in the Perspective of the Younger Churches," appears in Ecumenical Review, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Winter 1949), pp. 131-136, Devanesen's ("Post-Amsterdam Thoughts from a Younger Church") in the same volume, pp. 142-149.

2. Ibid., p. 149.

Mission and Unity, or as Ranson phrased it, Missionary Urgency and Ecumenical Challenge. This same conviction held many Asian Christians together in the years following the Bangkok Conference, and it eventually led them to search for a more concrete expression of their solidarity in the region.

(a) The common Asian contribution to the world ecumenical movement

Mission (here understood generally as the total missionary activity of the Church) and unity were regarded by many Asian Christians as integral to and inseparable from each other. Asian delegates were very much moved by the inauguration of the World Council in 1948. But they were not particularly pleased by what they believed to be a general lack of emphasis in the assembly on corporate unity and missionary urgency within the Church. Three prominent Asian delegates spoke about this. Writing in one of the books which were used as preparatory readings for the assembly, Devanandan claimed that in the West there was

... emphasis on a "federal basis" of union while our insistence is on "organic union".

We are concerned seriously with the fact that church-consciousness and mission-consciousness have not always kept together in the recent development of the older churches. The ecumenical teaching in regard to interdenominational fellowship evokes great enthusiasm. But the challenge of the missionary cause as an ecumenical task does not seem to meet with the same response.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, in a review of the assembly, Devanesen reiterated: "Our main concern is to see that the missionary emphasis becomes central to the life of the churches represented within the World Council."<sup>2</sup> He asked whether mission should still be carried out along denominational lines or whether the time had come when it could be "supradenominational" in character, and hoped that "through the World Council ... the missionary

---

1. Devanandan, "The Ecumenical Movement and the Younger Churches," pp. 150, 153.

2. Devanesen, "Post-Amsterdam Thoughts from a Younger Church," p. 148.

movement could become the concern of the whole church, wiping out the distinction between sending and receiving churches".<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, T.C. Chao, seeing in the new Council a vision of the coming Una Sancta, "the coming Church", said:

A loyalty to one's own confession is no longer to be true to itself without a larger and more ample loyalty to the Church which is to come ....

The prayer of the younger Churches is that the World Council may live not too long a life, for as long as it exists, the Church Universal is not. When the Church is, the Council ceases to be. And the glory of the World Council is in the end which it serves.

And he concluded:

The Younger Churches, which differ from each other in many respects, have the same eagerness to press for complete and corporate unity. For their life depends upon the successful achievement of the Churches in becoming the one and undivided Church.<sup>2</sup>

The Asian delegates at Amsterdam could speak together with force and strong conviction, for they had in the newly united Church of South India, which had come into being only a year before the Assembly was held, one clear demonstration to the older churches of what could be attained.

The Asian Christian understanding of the integral relationship between mission and unity was also felt at both the IMC meeting held at Willingen and the World Council's Faith and Order Conference held at Lund in — respectively — July and August 1952.

At Willingen, the delegates were concerned about what many of them described as the "immobility" of the missionary situation in the world. At one stage of the discussion, the delegates of the younger churches were challenged to examine whether the use of resources placed at the disposal of their churches was related to the Church's missionary obligation and by what means their churches might render possible a new missionary initiative. The delegates, many of whom came from Asia, issued a statement

---

1. Devanesen, "Post-Amsterdam Thoughts from a Younger Church," p. 149.

2. Chao, "Amsterdam in the Perspective of the Younger Churches," pp. 132, 135.



in reply. They said they could not agree with the generalization that the whole missionary situation was one of "immobility"; the question was not merely one of greater mobility — the need was for "a dynamic outreach of the Church". The Church, they said, must be central in the recovery of initiative and mobility: "The secret of achieving this recovery is that every Christian in the younger churches should be a witnessing Christian."<sup>1</sup> Their central understanding on the issue was as follows:

We are convinced that missionary work should be done through the Church. We should cease to speak of "missions and churches" and avoid this dichotomy not only in our thinking but also in our actions. We should now speak about the mission of the Church ...

We believe that unity of the churches is an essential condition of effective witness and advance. In the lands of the younger churches divided witness is a crippling handicap. We of the younger churches feel this very keenly. While unity may be desirable in the lands of the older churches, it is IMPERATIVE in those of the younger churches.<sup>2</sup>

The Asian delegates made their presence and their unchanged convictions felt again at the Lund Conference. In this Conference an attempt was made to break the stalemate created by the doctrinal and ecclesiastical approaches to the issues of Faith and Order with one of seeking "to initiate a theological study of the biblical teaching about the relation between Christ and the Church".<sup>3</sup> In other words, the attempt was a return to the Bible. "But," David Gaines also observes, "optimism concerning this course could only be tempered when it was remembered that the Bible had more often divided than united Christians."<sup>4</sup> In this situation, the approach of the Asian delegates stood out again as significant and different. As at Willingen, they joined together with a few others from other younger churches outside Asia and issued a separate

---

1. IMC, The Missionary Obligation of the Church; Willingen, Germany, July 5-17, 1952 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1952), p. 39.

2. Ibid., p. 40.

3. Oliver S. Tomkins (ed.), The Third World Conference on Faith and Order, Lund 1952 (London: SCM Press, 1953), p. 12.

4. Gaines, World Council of Churches, p. 484.



statement setting out their own approach and conviction, if not their impatience as well about the approaches being taken by the older churches. They pleaded for support and understanding from the older churches for the various church union negotiations being conducted in East Asia.

"We desire church unity," they explained, "primarily because it is the will of our Lord. In this matter the parent churches must resist the temptation to measure everything by their own standards."<sup>1</sup> The younger churches, they said, were by no means indifferent to the issues of Faith and Order, but regarded the task as primarily one of restoring "all those elements of Faith and Order ... in a just balance" again. In this task, they urged,

... let it be remembered that unprecedented situations cannot be dealt with in every detail by the precedents of church history; and further, where all the fruits of visible union cannot be had at the inception of a scheme of union, our friends in the West must for the peace of the church apply a self-denying ordinance to themselves in certain particulars where they expect more of us than they are ready to demand of themselves.<sup>2</sup>

They then defended themselves for taking such a stand:

We would plead with you to use your influence to encourage similar schemes of union amongst yourselves and your kindred overseas, so that the inevitable crop of anomalies on the way to union would be reduced. While we appreciate the place given to Asia to occupy in such creative tasks, we ourselves must guard our honour against the possibility of our services to Christian unity being mistaken for a by-product of Asian nationalism.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, with the newly united Church of South India again in the background, they challenged the older churches:

We can testify with gladness that we have seen the vision of a church in which the episcopal, presbyterial and congregational elements have each their structural place in the life of a united church; and we humbly seek to bear this testimony before you and share our vision with you if you so desire it.<sup>4</sup>

---

1. Tomkins, 3rd World Conference on Faith and Order, Lund 1952, p. 310.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 311.

At Lund, Weber believes, Asian delegates "helped to change the course of Faith and Order from the backward and inward-looking study of ecclesiology to the forward-looking adventure of the pilgrimage of Christ and his Church".<sup>1</sup> But Gaines has doubted this: "It was not certain to what extent the Conference wished the churches to act in this direction."<sup>2</sup> However, one thing was clear—Asian delegates at Willingen and Lund were united in one spirit, for they shared a common conviction on evangelistic urgency and the unity of the Church in East Asia.

(b) Mission and unity — one single entity

The Lucknow Conference, as described earlier, was noted for its new emphasis on Christian social involvement in East Asia. But the Conference also provided an opportunity to move Asian Christians to reflect together on the central concerns of the Willingen and Lund Conferences in the context of actual situations in East Asia. In his address to the Conference, D.G. Moses strongly opposed the idea that Mission and Unity were two poles separate from each other; he argued that they were

... two aspects of one single entity, like the two sides of a coin. The Mission of the Church without unity can never be the full and obedient fulfilment of the mission ... And the unity of the Church apart from a more vigorous, bold and adventurous witnessing to the truth of the Gospel is a dead unity, something that is splendidly null and beautifully void.<sup>3</sup>

He agreed with the view expressed at Willingen "that it is no longer a question of mission AND unity but of 'mission IN unity'".<sup>4</sup>

---

1. Weber, Asia and the Ecumenical Movement, p. 224.

2. Gaines, World Council of Churches, p. 485.

3. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 9.

4. Ibid.

Moses also questioned the gradual development of world confessional bodies and asked whether it was "a step towards the real unity of the churches or whether they do not make the task of real organic unity between denominations more remote and formidable".<sup>1</sup> "The rank and file of [Asian] Christians," he claimed,

... long for unity ... hate the denominational walls that divide them from their brethren ... They want to unite in one Church — not only for the pragmatic reason that union is strength — but even more because of a growing realization that Christians who are unreconciled with one another can never be fit to witness to the gospel of reconciliation.<sup>2</sup>

D.T. Niles led the discussion at Lucknow on the issue of mission and unity. Following up Moses' hard-hitting address, he said:

The Mission of the Church is the mission of a United Church. The Church has prosecuted its mission for so long at half strength, and yet in God's mercy won so many successes, that it sometimes assumes that it can continue to fight at half strength. The churches of Asia are faced with the urgent need of seeing the true connection between the Mission and Unity of the Church and of acting on it.<sup>3</sup>

Moses' and Niles' views won the approval of the delegates, and the Conference urged that "immediate and radical action should be taken to implement the Lund proposition" ("Act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately").<sup>4</sup> It urged further that interdenominational boards be set up to manage the affairs of denominational institutions and to make plans for central united institutions only. It appealed to missionary societies to treat united institutions as a priority in allocating funds and personnel.<sup>5</sup> The Conference welcomed the plan which was being considered for the integration of the IMC and the WCC; "this [was] of great moment for

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 72.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 54.

4. Ibid., p. 24; Tomkins, 3rd World Conference on Faith and Order, Lund 1952, p. 16.

5. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 24.

the younger churches,"<sup>1</sup> for in their thinking the IMC represented all that concerned mission, and the WCC the whole question of unity. The integration of the two would vindicate Asian Christians' strong conviction that mission and unity were integral to and inseparable from each other. At Lucknow, Asian church leaders had shown their great concern about the growing development of confessionalism:

World confessional movements are a phenomenon which hold in them great promise as well as great danger. To the extent that they are concerned with the conservation and the sharing of a heritage they are good, but to the extent that they plan the extension and imposition of their confessionalism in the lands of the younger churches they are a great danger. For the younger churches, the Church Unity Movement is the one which is of primary importance, and world confessionalism might jeopardise the regional principle on which the Church Unity Movement is based.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly they proposed that confessional organisations be represented in the WCC so that the younger churches might have the opportunity to converse with them within the framework of the ecumenical movement.

Asian Christians at Lucknow asked for many changes and new relations in the whole matter of mission and church unity in East Asia. But as will be seen later in this study, it has been a long struggle to get the older churches, the mission agencies and the world confessional bodies to take seriously the aspirations and convictions expressed by Asian Christians at Tambaram, Bangkok, Willingen, Lund and again at Lucknow.

The book edited by Manikam provided a great opportunity for Asian Christians to express together their strong convictions on the same basic issues. They had no hesitation in stating to the churches in the West:

As you in the West think of the ways in which you can help to strengthen the Church's witness in East Asia, we ask you to remember that we need men and women who can live out with us God's answer to a divided world. The total needs of the work ... must be met by the total resources. Yet often out here the work of the Spirit is hindered because, for reasons of your division, one denomination is unable to help another, even when a great door of

---

1. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 25.

2. Ibid.

opportunity is suddenly opened. Do not send us missionaries who will look at each other critically over denominational walls. We need the kind of Christians who, while valuing their own heritage, are determined not to perpetuate those historic divisions which, whatever they may mean to you, have far less relevance to us in our Asian context.

. . . . .  
We recognize that we are called into one Body in the midst of a society that is broken into many antagonistic groups. We are eager to set our faces against any imported sectarianism such as can only add to the barriers that already divide the peoples of Asia. . . . Nothing less than organic church union must be our goal.<sup>1</sup>

The statement repeated their misgivings about the development of confessionalism. They warned:

It creates for us specially difficult problems at a time when, in our task of evangelism, we must draw closer together in our own lands. In this, as in other matters concerning the growth of the churches in East Asia, we must be left free to make our own choice of loyalty under the guidance of God.<sup>2</sup>

In conclusion, their defence was:

We have no desire to think of ourselves as an East Asian BLOC, or to enhance our national characteristics by depriving ourselves of the fellowship of Christians from abroad. We are grateful for our God-given national heritage, and we shall strive together to hold to it so that it may never divide but only enrich all nations.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. The Second Attempt

Asian Christians' first attempt to find concrete expressions for their solidarity in East Asia met with limited success at Bangkok in 1949. But during the years after Bangkok, they remained united not by any regional ecumenical structure in East Asia but by their common convictions and aspirations regarding the urgency of mission and the unity of the Church in East Asia. But the time had become ripe now in the mid-1950s

---

1. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, pp. 289-290.

2. Ibid., p. 290.

3. Ibid., p. 293.



to launch the second attempt, and there were three main factors which helped to make this eventually successful.

Firstly, there was the growing recognition accorded by ecumenical and church leaders in the West to the important contribution made by the thinking of Asian churches and Christians to the world ecumenical movement. Closely connected with this was a new awareness of the growing importance of the Asian continent in international affairs. Christians in the West were prepared to listen to voices from Asia, although whether listening might be followed by agreement and action was at that stage an entirely different matter. Neill observed that delegates from the younger churches were now taking part

... with far greater confidence and freedom in international gatherings of Christian leaders; they have thrown off the timidity and uncertainty which marked many of them in earlier years, and now speak with authority, as representatives of great Churches, knowing that their words will be listened to with respect.<sup>1</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the WCC Central Committee held at Lucknow recognised clearly the Asian peoples' struggles for social and economic justice. The Committee urged churches in the West to show support and understanding for these struggles. It accepted the Asian Christians' conviction that the evangelistic task in Asia was primarily their own responsibility; but at the same time the churches in the West were urged to redouble their help in a spirit of partnership in order to strengthen the missionary obedience of the Asian churches. The Committee told the member-churches of the Council:

No-one can enter today into the Asian scene without realizing at every hand the urgency with which many of the churches and Christian people are crying for unity. Where Christians find themselves as a small minority in the midst of vast communities of non-Christian peoples the call of God to all of us to seek for unity is powerfully reinforced by the demands and circumstances of the situation, and by their own task of witness.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Neill, Christian Partnership, p. 17.

2. Lucknow 1952 Report, p. 39.



Visser't Hooft also recognised the growing importance of the Asian continent in international world affairs. In his report to the Central Committee Meeting at Davos in 1955, he said many delegates at the Evanston Assembly had begun to realize that

... the decisive question for humanity in the next decades is whether it will be possible to arrive at a constructive relationship between the Asian-African world and the other continents and whether the resources of fellowship, of imagination, of money, of the whole Christian community will be made fully available for the creation of healthy economic, social, political and moral conditions in Asia and Africa.<sup>1</sup>

Asia was becoming the focus of world ecumenical attention. And this was forcing Asian Christians and their churches to take even more seriously their responsibility, identity and relationship not only among themselves and as integral parts of the Asian continent and its peoples but also among the churches and peoples outside Asia.

Secondly, if Asian Christians knew that they had something to give to the world ecumenical movements, there was also a growing desire among them to practise and to express these in concrete terms in East Asia itself. Some went out from Asia to make their contributions of thought to the world meetings of the WCC and the IMC, but many of their fellow-Asian Christians knew little about them. As there was no permanent regional ecumenical machinery to bring them together, it was still true that Asian Christians met in the West more than in East Asia itself. Their convictions and learnings were known to the West more than to their fellow-Asian Christians, particularly in those countries which happened to be less in contact with the world ecumenical movement.

There was also the pressure from the churches in the West for concrete expressions of Asian Christians' convictions in Asia itself. Neill had said that some churchmen in the West wanted plans and blue-prints from

---

1. Report of the General Secretary to the World Council of Churches, ER VIII, No. 1 (October 1955), p. 60.

Asian Christians to show their real intention and capability of shouldering the tasks of evangelization in East Asia; similarly at Willingen they were openly challenged as to whether they were using the resources at their disposal to the real benefit of the missionary obligation and initiative of the Church. Conversely too, Asian Christians were not content merely to contribute their views and beliefs to the world ecumenical movements such as the WCC and the IMC. They wanted their views to be taken seriously and acted upon. And they began to realize that unless the Asian churches could band together to exert the pressure of their opinions upon institutions such as the WCC, the IMC, the older churches or mission agencies, concrete action would not occur. It was also thought that great opportunities for evangelism still existed in East Asia. As described earlier, this was a dominant thought among Asian Christians at that time. They regarded this evangelizing task as primarily theirs, although they were also ready to welcome help from the older churches based on the principle of partnership.

The open statement, "Asian Churchmen Speak," contained in Manikam's book included many practical suggestions and recommendations on the evangelistic task of the churches in East Asia. Asian Christians wanted gospel teams travelling and preaching from one Asian country to another. They wanted the fullest exchange of personnel between Asian churches and theological colleges. They wanted students from all parts of Asia and from the West to come together to study the Christian faith. All these suggestions and recommendations were not unlike those brought out on the last day of the Bangkok Conference.<sup>1</sup> Manikam, as has been shown, could not possibly meet all the many aspirations and needs of the churches and Christians of that time. His assigned role was pastoral and "ambassadorial"; he did not have any regional administrative machinery to help

---

1. Manikam, Christianity and the Asian Revolution, pp. 288-293; also supra, pp. 121-122.

him. Thus, it was even more evident in the mid-1950s that there was a great need for a permanent and administrative regional ecumenical structure in East Asia.

Thirdly, it cannot be denied that this second attempt came about partly as a result of the impact of current political events. The culmination of these events was the holding of the Bandung Conference in April 1955. The mid-1950s was a time when many Asian and African nations were searching for a policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence as a way out from the tension of the Cold War.<sup>1</sup> In this search, Asian nationalism and Asian continentalism or regionalism had their maximum influence upon many Asian peoples and nations, particularly among those in the Indian sub-continent and Indonesia. The idea of a third world power bloc consisting of Asian and African nations had great appeal among some people and nations in Asia and Africa. Certain Asian Christians had also felt the impact of these events. Indeed, if this had not been true, they would not have felt it necessary to declare in the statement "Asian Churchmen Speak" that they had no intention of forming an East Asian bloc. Thus, the fear of "regionalism" which aborted the Asian Christians' first attempt to create concrete expressions of their solidarity in East Asia became even more open among some world ecumenical leaders in their understanding of the second attempt. For this time, because of the trends of Asian political thinking this fear carried with it clear political and racial overtones.

(a) The "plot" of ACIM

The second attempt started as a "plot" behind the back of the world ecumenical leadership, in that it did not seek its blessing and approval

---

1. Supra, pp. 19-21.

first.

It is significant that from the end of the War until the mid-1950s Asian Christian leadership and initiative came mainly from the Indian sub-continent. This time, however, it was to come from North-East Asia. The "front-leader" of this "plot" was Bishop Enrique C. Sobrepena of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, himself a member of the WCC Central Committee, and behind him was Dr. Charles Leber, the general secretary of the Board of Mission of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, who was keen to see some concrete forms of organised partnership in the task of mission between churches in the East and in the West. Sobrepena noted the great sense of urgency attached to evangelism by many Asian churches of that time, and also observed, like Manikam, signs of an Asian missionary movement in the area. For example, his own church had already sent out a number of missionaries to other Asian countries. Missionary societies already operating in the area also took note of this new development in the Asian churches as something to be encouraged.

It was becoming increasingly evident that some form of association had to emerge which could co-ordinate these movements and, above all, help foster further this lively missionary initiative springing up among the Asian churches. This common conviction quickly developed into action. A consultation among the interested parties was held in Hong Kong in 1954 and the formation of an Interim Committee on Mission was enthusiastically endorsed. In July 1955, representatives of six national churches in the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Thailand and four missionary societies, all of Reformed, Presbyterian and Methodist traditions, gathered again in Hong Kong and the Asia Council on Ecumenical Mission (ACEM) was officially brought into being, with financial backing from the United Presbyterian Church in the USA. Sobrepena was elected Chairman.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. E.C. Sobrepena, That They May Be One (Manila: United Church of Christ in the Philippines, 2nd Edn. 1964), p. 119. Members of ACEM were:- Dr. Darley Downs, Japan, of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign/...

Few could accuse the declared purposes of ACEM of being contrary to what had been proposed at Whitby, Bangkok, Willingen and Lund. For example, ACEM was to develop and strengthen the Asian churches in the discharge of their ecumenical mission; to encourage and facilitate exchange of personnel between church and church and between country and country; to assist Asian churches in the support of ecumenical projects; to receive contributions from churches and mission boards (but allocation of funds would be made by the Council on the basis of need and ecumenical relevance); to initiate the study and implementation of regional ecumenical projects such as evangelistic missions, theological education, use of mass media, study of religions, cultures and social issues.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly, as has been demonstrated all along in this chapter, all these were what many Asian Christians and churches so badly needed at that time, and it was to meet these needs that ACEM was set up. Sobrepena claimed that "they had previously sought the assistance of the two world ecumenical bodies (the WCC and IMC), but for some reason had failed to receive it";<sup>2</sup> consequently ACEM was formed without first seeking the blessing of these bodies, and the work of their Joint East Asia Secretary in the

---

Foreign Missions (Congregational Christian) and the United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples of Christ); Rev. Paul Jefferies, Hong Kong, of the Methodist Missionary Society (London); Rev. John Muilenburgh, Philippines, of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America; Rev. Horace Ryburn, Thailand, of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA; Rev. Kozo Kashiwai, Japan, of the United Church of Christ in Japan; Dr. Ii-Seung Kay, Korea, of the Presbyterian Church of Korea; Rev. Leck Tai Yong, Thailand, of the Church of Christ in Thailand; Rev. C.M. Lee, Hong Kong, of the Hong Kong District Association of the Church of Christ in China; Bishop E.C. Sobrepena, Philippines, of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines; and Rev. Rodney A. Sunberg, Philippines, Interim Secretary of the East Asia Committee.

1. Ibid., pp. 120-125; and in The Common Evangelistic Task of the Churches in East Asia, papers and minutes of the East Asia Christian Conference, Prapat, Indonesia, March 17-26, 1957 (hereafter referred to as Prapat 1957 Report), pp. 158-160.
2. Sobrepena, That They May Be One, p. 119.



person of Manikam came into direct confrontation with the new body. On the other hand, ACEM did propose that in order that its relationship with the WCC and the IMC might "be strengthened and the work integrated with the total ecumenical task", the two latter bodies should be "invited to appoint their East Asia Secretary as an ex-officio member of the Asia Council on Ecumenical Mission".<sup>1</sup>

The world ecumenical leadership reacted to this initiative for concrete and united action on evangelism in East Asia with some displeasure. According to Sobrepena's account, he was sharply reminded by both Visser't Hooft and Ranson that at Bangkok it had been insisted upon "that no additional machinery should be interposed between the Churches and the Councils on the one hand and the WCC and the IMC on the other".<sup>2</sup> Sobrepena was then asked by ACEM to explain the situation personally to the world ecumenical leaders at the WCC Central Committee meeting which was being held at Davos in Switzerland. His initial reception at Davos was not exactly welcoming. According to his own account:

Some of them were opposed to the new organisation. Some feared the development of regionalism; and others objected to the use of the word "ecumenical" in the name of the new Council, since its membership was limited.<sup>3</sup>

However, after Sobrepena's further explanation that

... the church leaders of Asia wanted to co-operate with leaders of the WCC and the IMC, but that they also wanted to associate with one another now, the temper of the meeting changed. It was agreed that the desire of East Asian Churchmen to participate in the mission of the Church should be recognised and used.<sup>4</sup>

An agreement was then reached to hold a consultation on the desirability of a regional organisation of churches in East Asia, and this was

---

1. Frapat 1957 Report, p. 160.

2. Sobrepena, That They May Be One, p. 115.

3. Ibid., p. 126.

4. Ibid.



subsequently held at Bangkok in March 1956.

About fifty delegates from fourteen different countries from Pakistan to New Zealand attended the Consultation at Bangkok. The officers of ACEM and the top leaders of the WCC and the IMC were all present. According to Sobrepena's account, Vissert't Hooft and Ranson "expressed the reasons why the leaders of the IMC and the WCC felt that there was no need for a regional organisation".<sup>1</sup> They claimed that the WCC and the IMC were maintaining close relations with the churches in Asia and ecumenical attention was in fact turning towards Asia. "Asians felt somewhat awed by the presence of these men [the world ecumenical] leaders, but they did not hesitate to speak their minds,"<sup>2</sup> said Sobrepena. And his own mind was made up principally on the basis of the declared purposes of ACEM. But he concluded:

We ask, may not churches and councils take the initiative, especially in situations where the need is urgent, in organising themselves for mutual good? Moreover, the initiative has come from the younger Churches in Asia, in a locale that is not New York or Geneva, but Hong Kong, and in an area where the greatest struggle in ideology and doctrine and way of life is taking place.<sup>3</sup>

By the end of the deliberations it was very clear that the majority of the delegates were on the side of ACEM:

Manikam summarized the virtually unanimous conclusion of the consultation in these words:

- (a) there has been an increasing exchange of personnel;
- (b) this exchange has been clearly linked with the evangelization of East Asia;
- (c) this exchange is now on an international and interdenominational level; and
- (d) the Asian Churches seek to have the exchange directed by a local and not a remote organisation.<sup>4</sup>

The Consultation then agreed to request the IMC/WCC to convene a representative conference of the member churches of the WCC and the member

---

1. Sobrepena, That They May Be One, p. 128.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 129.

4. Ibid.

councils of the IMC in East Asia to make a definite decision on the form of a permanent administrative regional ecumenical structure which could combine the functions of ACEM and the East Asia Secretary of the IMC/WCC.

(b) The formation of EACC — "A Happy Fulfilment"

The East Asia Christian Conference came into being in the representative conference held at Prapat, Indonesia, on March 17-26, 1957. The forty-four official delegates from eleven Asian countries wholeheartedly supported the proposal "that an Eastern Asia Christian Conference be constituted as an organ of continuing co-operation among the Churches and Christian Councils in East Asia within the framework of the IMC/WCC."<sup>1</sup> Sobrepena and D.G. Moses, the new Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the Conference, said:

It was thus a historical gathering of tremendous ecumenical significance, and was a happy fulfilment of a growing desire of the Churches in the countries of East Asia to have fellowship with one another and join more closely to execute our Lord's work.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, the establishment of EACC marked the realization of a long search and a long struggle on the part of Asian Christians to find concrete expression for their solidarity in evangelism and unity in East Asia — a search that had started at Tambaram, initiated by the Chinese and the Japanese NCCs. But sadly, as at Bangkok in 1949, Christians from China could not be present on this historic occasion.<sup>3</sup>

The sense of the urgency and priority of evangelism still dominated

---

1. Prapat 1957 Report, p. 104. This resolution was changed at the Inaugural Assembly in 1959 to — "as an organ of continuing cooperation among the Churches and National Christian Councils in East Asia within the framework of the wider ecumenical movement." See Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 10.

2. Prapat 1957 Report, p. i.

3. Ibid., p. 73.

the thinking of the Prapat Conference. The central theme of the conference was "The Common Evangelistic Task". M.M. Thomas spoke a great deal on Christian social responsibility in the Asian Revolution,<sup>1</sup> but his address proved "too profound to produce immediate reaction in discussion from the floor of the conference".<sup>2</sup> The delegates looked on evangelism and only evangelism as the central and urgent task of their churches and of their new organisation. As Kyaw Than rightly said, "the great concern for evangelism had prompted the organisation of this meeting".<sup>3</sup> The reports from different NCCs, not unlike those presented at the Bangkok Conference in 1949, mentioned evangelistic and revival meetings and campaigns, and the joy of making thousands of converts. "Thousands ... are admitted to the Christian church."<sup>4</sup> Sobrepena strongly emphasised evangelism in his address at Prapat. The missionary movement, he said, moved like a circle. It started in the East. It moved to the West, and it was now coming back to the East. The sense of mission was now "haunting Asian Christians and Christian churches more and more, and compelling them to action."<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the Conference declared:

We have come more fully to realize that the churches in Asia are eager and ready to share in the world-wide task of Christian mission, particularly in the evangelistic task so insistently needed in our contemporary situation, and to engage in these tasks unitedly convinced that "WE CAN DO TOGETHER WHAT WE CANNOT DO SEPARATELY".<sup>6</sup>

The delegates "decided by resolution ... that the whole work of the Conference should forward the 'common evangelistic task in East Asia and that top priorities should be given to the development of ecumenical teams

---

1. Prapat 1957 Report, p. 84.

2. Harvey L. Perkins and Winburn T. Thomas, A Report of the Prapat Conference (Sydney: Australian Council for the World Council of Churches, n.d.), p. 12.

3. Prapat 1957 Report, p. 74.

4. Ibid., pp. 43 and 52.

5. Ibid., p. 86.

6. Ibid., p. 103.

for evangelism and the exchange of information concerning the successful practice of evangelism."<sup>1</sup> Thus, at Prapat, the response from Asian Christians in relation to the quests of the Asian peoples of the time was still preaching Christ and winning converts to Him and to the increase of the membership of the Asian churches.

But the Asian Christian leaders at Prapat also decided that EACC should maintain very close connections with the IMC and the WCC. They resolved that the two world ecumenical bodies should be invited to all future EACC meetings. They would be represented in the EACC's Continuation Committee and the Working Committee. The on-going work of the organisation was to be administered by three secretaries of an enlarged East Asia Secretariat of the IMC and the WCC. The three secretaries nominated at the Conference to be appointed by the two world bodies were D.T. Niles of India as General Secretary, U Kyaw Than of Burma as Associate Secretary, and A.A. Brash of New Zealand for Inter-Church Aid. Thus the three secretaries would serve not only EACC interests but also those of the IMC and the WCC at the same time. The delegates also decided that the Conference should participate fully in the WCC and IMC programmes such as inter-church aid and the study of rapid social change. Three budgets were proposed: the budget for the Secretariat would be the responsibility of the WCC and the IMC, while the two others, one for meetings of the Continuation and Working Committees and the other for programmes and projects, would be met by contributions from members of the Conference, the IMC and the WCC, missionary societies and other co-operative agencies.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Perkins and Thomas, Report of the Prapat Conference, p. 16.

2. Prapat 1957 Report, pp. 103-109: "Plan of Future Action". This close connection with the WCC and IMC was retained in the official constitution of the EACC adopted at the Inaugural Assembly; see Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 17-20. With the merger between WCC and IMC in 1961, the EACC Constitution was also amended accordingly in its relationships/....

It was clear therefore that EACC was not established as an independent, self-supporting or exclusively "Asian" organisation. Its close organisational connection with the two world ecumenical bodies and its financial dependence upon them would raise inevitable questions as to whether EACC was going to be their "extension" or "appendage" in East Asia, and whether it would eventually lose its own initiative and fail to meet the real aspirations of the Christians and churches in the region. Visser't Hooft recognised well the difficult dilemma that the three secretaries would have to face: this might be "an impossible compromise", he admitted, but it was "a Christian principle" in international collaboration.<sup>1</sup>

(c) Bandung and Prapat — a distorted comparison

However, the real reason for imposing this dual role upon the EACC officers may have been, once again, the fear of narrow Asian nationalism and fragmentation of the world ecumenical movement. It was the fear that EACC might follow the way of the Bandung Conference, which was regarded by many peoples and nations in the West as separatist, anti-West, racial, an expression of restrictive Asian and African nationalism. Sukarno's visit, his address to the Conference and his greeting that "the Bandung Spirit may permeate your conference rooms"<sup>2</sup> tended to exacerbate the suspicion that the Prapat Conference might be just an "ecclesiastical replica" of the Bandung Conference. Indeed, as late as 1970, Weber could

---

relationships with the two bodies. However, the close organisational and financial dependence have remained very much the same (see Appendix C: "The Constitution of the EACC). Until 1968, the Administrative Budget was still contributed directly by the WCC. The Programme Budget was supported to approximately 40% by the member bodies, and the balance was sought through the project listing of DICARWS and the programme budget of DWME (see Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 53).

1. WCC Central Committee Meeting Minutes, Nyborg, Denmark, August 21-29, 1958, p. 77.
2. Prapat 1957 Report, p. 151.



still say:

Many had feared that the meeting in Prapat might become a mere ecclesiastical replica of the Asian/African Bandung Conference in 1955, where a political power bloc formed itself over against the Western nations. But true ecumenical regionalism has nothing to do with the forming of continental or racial power blocs.<sup>1</sup>

And he cited the inclusion of the churches of Australia and New Zealand into the membership of EACC as evidence of this "true ecumenical regionalism".<sup>2</sup> The WCC leadership had grown concerned again about the membership of these two countries when it became evident that EACC was coming into being; they said they would welcome the desire of the churches of these countries to be prepared "to be related to any new structure which may be decided upon by the Asian Churches". The world ecumenical leadership regarded this desire as "a most positive element in the ecumenical and international situation. Australia and New Zealand may be called to play an important role as bridge-builders between Asia and the West."<sup>3</sup>

But, as already shown, the Bandung Conference was not a disaster or even anti-West,<sup>4</sup> although it was undoubtedly anti-colonial. It was basically a major expression of the Asian peoples' struggles for world peace, freedom, self-determination, social and economic justice, and Asian solidarity in economic and cultural co-operation. The Conference did succeed in easing the tension of the Cold War for a few years, and consequently gave a breathing space to some new Asian and African nations to consider more seriously their task of economic development and the establishment of the selfhood of their nations. In fact, the communiqué issued by that Conference showed the participating nations to have had a

---

1. Hans-Ruedi Weber, "Out of All Continents and Nations" in Harold E. Fey (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance, A History of the Ecumenical Movement, Vol. II, 1948-1968 (London: SPCK, 1970), p. 70.

2. Ibid.

3. "World Council Diary," ER VIII, No. 3 (April 1956), p. 332. See also supra, p. 117.

4. Supra, pp. 19-21.



high regard for the United Nations and just international order and co-operation. Many of the issues and recommendations mentioned in this communiqué corresponded with the real needs of the time, and some have become since then central issues of concern among the nations of the world today. Indeed, as will be seen later in this study, both the WCC and EACC have found themselves heavily engaged in the past ten years in these same struggles for "Liberation, Justice, and Development".<sup>1</sup> Comments made at that time, such as those quoted below, sometimes show a great lack of understanding in depth of the real significance either of the Bandung Conference or of the needs and aspirations of Asian Christians:

The East Asia Christian Conference was in a way analogous to the great Bandung Conference ... Yet it must also be emphasized that there was no indication of a desire to establish a "colour bloc" in the ecumenical movement.<sup>2</sup>

- There was no sign of separatist tendencies [at Prapat].<sup>3</sup>
- Prapat formed no Asian bloc.<sup>4</sup>
- The meeting was in no sense "another Bandung".<sup>5</sup>

These constant warnings that EACC must not be a replica of the Bandung Conference to some extent prevented or delayed the emergence of EACC's true form. The subsequent close and dependent organisational connection between EACC and the WCC and IMC, which the delegates resolved to maintain, was not unaffected by this misunderstanding of the real significance of the Bandung Conference. Stephen Neill remarked in 1959 that progress towards the eventual formation of EACC had been "spasmodic rather than even, and [had] been dependent more upon impulse rather than thoughtful

- 
1. This was the title of the Report of the Asian Ecumenical Conference for Development. It was sponsored by the EACC, the WCC and the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace, Rome. It was held in Tokyo from July 14-22, 1970.
  2. Prapat 1957 Report, p. 16.
  3. WCC Central Committee Meeting Minutes, New Haven, 1957, p. 83.
  4. Perkins and Thomas, Report of the Prapat Conference, p. 19.
  5. Norman Goodall, "John R. Mott and the East Asia Christian Conference" in A Decisive Hour for the Christian Mission, John R. Mott Memorial Lectures, EACC 1959 (London: SCM Press, 1960), p. 15.

planning".<sup>1</sup> Such comment fails to do justice to the fact that among Asian Christians themselves, there was clearly a central stream of careful thinking and planning leading to Prapat. If progress had been spasmodic and dependent on impulse, this was mainly due to the suspicion and hesitation evinced by much of the world ecumenical leadership.

. . .

The Asian peoples' quests for freedom, peace and solidarity during the turbulent years from the end of the War to about 1957 drew Asian Christians and churches together in a search for relevant Christian response. But Prapat only symbolised the end of the first period of this response. The struggle against denominationalism, paternalism and confessionalism had just begun. The selfhood of the Asian churches had still to be established. The new understanding on the social implications of the Gospel was still in its formative stage. Meanwhile, the greatest concern among the majority of Asian Christians was the urgent task of evangelism, which was understood primarily as preaching Christ to all men and winning Asian men and women to the increase of the membership of His churches in East Asia. But such evangelism soon came to be regarded as an inadequate response to meet the rapidly changing needs and challenges of the Asian quests. Evangelism and social involvement would have to join forces together in order to fulfil the total commission of the Church in East Asia. Indeed, as will be described in the next chapter, a renewed understanding of the Gospel and the mission of the Church in East Asia had become a necessity. Meanwhile, the three secretaries of the new organisation were eventually appointed at the WCC Central Committee meeting at New Haven in July 1957, and the work and life of EACC began.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Stephen C. Neill, Creative Tension (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1959), p. 50.

2. WCC Central Committee Meeting Minutes, New Haven, 1957, p. 71.

---

S E C T I O N      I I I

---

### SECTION III

#### ASIAN CHRISTIAN RESPONSE: SECOND PERIOD 1958-1968

---

The Inaugural Assembly of the EACC held at Kuala Lumpur in May 1959 marked the beginning of a process which was to move rapidly towards a renewed Asian Christian understanding of the Gospel and the mission of the Church in East Asia. Until Prapat 1957, evangelism understood primarily in its traditional sense was regarded as the central and most urgent task of the Asian churches. The EACC came into being mainly on the basis of this common belief. Nevertheless at Kuala Lumpur it was clear to the delegates, who represented nearly fifty Christian churches and councils from all parts of East Asia, that the very nature of evangelism itself, and of the Church's task, would have to go through a process of re-examination in the coming years. The beginning of this process is already clearly discernible in the commission reports and in the addresses given by the leaders of the Conference.

In the report on "The Missionary Obligations of Asian Churches" there still occurs the expression "the evangelisation of Asia". Indeed, some of the many assigned functions of the newly-formed Committee on Inter-Church Aid for Mission and Service were "to keep before the attention of the member churches the total missionary task in Asia, to awaken their concern for it, and to help them in discharging it." Such help was to include "recruitment of missionaries from member churches for service in other lands", and "selecting and sending evangelistic teams to visit strategic areas".<sup>1</sup> But besides these declared purposes, at Kuala

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 88, 91-92.

Lumpur Asian Christians were also challenged to a re-examination of their whole understanding of the Church and its selfhood and the mission of the Church in East Asia. It became clear that this re-examination was of great importance to the Asian churches if they were to become the churches in and for the new nations in East Asia having their own selfhood and fulfilling their task effectively and with relevance to the changing needs in the region.

D.T. Niles' lecture on "A Church and its 'Selfhood'", given at the Assembly as one of the John R. Mott Memorial Lectures, was an attempt to define the meaning and implications of this "selfhood" of the church in East Asia. Niles claimed there were "three modes of being a church". Firstly, it must be "a worshipping community" — he regarded this as "the basis of a church's selfhood". Secondly, it must be "the church in its location", meaning that "a church must first find itself as the church for the nation". And thirdly, it must be a church "in secular engagement". But to be the church in and for the nation, having its own selfhood, did not mean that it had no relationship with other churches; "this selfhood grows," said Niles, "in relationship with other selves," that is, with the churches outside its location.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, this was Niles' particular concern. He devoted more than half of his lecture to stating his understanding of this relationship between Asian churches and their parent churches, mission agencies, and world confessional bodies outside Asia. He saw this relationship as directly affecting the growth of selfhood, mission and unity in the Asian churches. Weber was correct in observing that Niles' address was more than a lecture — it "became a programme" in the EACC.<sup>2</sup> The delegates agreed with their General

---

1. D.T. Niles, "A Church and its Selfhood," in A Decisive Hour for the Christian Mission, pp. 72-96. This lecture was incorporated into Niles' book, Upon the Earth: The Mission of God and the Missionary Enterprise of the Church (London: Lutterworth Press, 1962), pp. 139-169.

2. Hans-Ruedi Weber, "Out of all Continents and Nations," p. 71.

Secretary's concern, and resolved, as will be seen later, that it was the responsibility of the EACC to help achieve such new and appropriate relationships on behalf of its member-churches.

Such deep concern about partnership in mission, unity among the churches, and the selfhood of the church, was of course not new. It was in continuity with the convictions already expressed so strongly by Asian delegates at Tambaram, Whitby, Bangkok, Willingen, Lund and Evanston. But with the EACC's coming into being, and under pressure of the quest for nationhood among the Asian peoples of the post-independence years, Asian Christians had come to realize that, brought together in their new organisation, they must now search together seriously for concrete expressions of these convictions. From the time of Kuala Lumpur onwards, this serious search to recover the meaning and implications of being the church in East Asia became an increasingly dominant area of concern in much of the thinking and many of the programmes of the EACC in the years that followed.

Another area of concern dominant from its beginnings at Kuala Lumpur has been the strong emphasis on Christian social involvement still notable in the EACC today. The shift from evangelism to social involvement first perceived at Kuala Lumpur was almost inevitable. The pressure on Asian churches and Christians towards active involvement in the whole of society started at the Lucknow Conference in 1952 and grew rapidly more powerful as increasing numbers of Asian churches and individuals became involved in the WCC's study programme on Rapid Social Change. This programme, initiated in 1955 by the WCC's Department on Church and Society, turned much of its attention to the many social questions confronting the churches in Asia and was in consequence soon seen to be "radically altering the character of ecumenical social thinking".<sup>1</sup> The

---

1. The Witness of the Churches in the Midst of Social Change (preparatory papers for Kuala Lumpur 1959), p. 126.



Siantar Conference in 1957 and the First Asian Conference on Industrial Evangelism held at Manila in June 1958 were all part of this world-wide study programme. In East Asia the result was a new and spreading awareness among Christians about the social implications of their faith. At Manila, as at Siantar, Asian churches were challenged "to intensify [their] prophetic ministry ... declaring Christian judgement on all social issues".<sup>1</sup>

The working paper on "The Social Witness of Asian Churches" prepared for the Kuala Lumpur Assembly spoke strongly for Christian social involvement. It recognised that most previous Asian statements on social concern had been the results of study conferences sponsored and held by the WCC and the IMC, and it looked to the new organisation, EACC, as a platform from which Asian churches would have an opportunity of their own "to speak together on their witness in the midst of social change". Indeed, it regarded this as "a test of the reality of this new ecumenical fellowship, and of the realism with which it understands the relevance of the Christian faith for the situation of Asia today".

"The Church has its prophetic ministry of criticism. But it can be effectively exercised only as participants and not as spectators."<sup>2</sup> M.M. Thomas was actively involved in the WCC's study programmes on Rapid Social Change. He has been the chief advocate in East Asia for Christian social involvement. His detailed survey of ecumenical social thought, prepared for the use of Assembly participants, must have placed considerable pressure upon the Kuala Lumpur Assembly by reason of its call for such involvement.<sup>3</sup> In his address to the Assembly he emphasised: "For a

---

1. To Understand Christian Responsibility in the Asian Industrial Awakening: Report of the First Asian Conference on Industrial Evangelism, Manila, June 2-13, 1958 (EACC, WCC and IMC), p. 14.

2. U Kwaw Than (ed.), Toward Kuala Lumpur 1959, Chap. IV, p. 10.

3. For this survey see the booklet The Witness of the Churches in the Midst of Social Change. Thomas was the editor of the EACC bulletin, Church and Society, from the first issue published in September 1960 from/....

Church which acknowledges the Lordship of Christ over the whole world and all history, it is necessary to discern Christ working in the world so that we may witness to what He is doing and be with Him, as He acts."<sup>1</sup>

But Thomas was not alone at Kuala Lumpur in urging Asian churches and Christians to participate fully in the total life of their society. Niles and Masao Takenaka of Japan did the same.

Niles, as already shown, included "Christians in secular engagement" as one of the three modes of being a church; Asian Christians had "still a long way to go" in this engagement; a church must live "within the world in all its various occupations — and its secular engagement must be illuminated by a true concern for the secular".<sup>2</sup> Takenaka, who like Thomas has since become one of the prominent figures in the circle of EACC leadership, called for a "theological renewal" in East Asia. "Theology," he explained, "must involve conversations with the living issues of our time here in Asia;" and again, "Our witness in this changing world must be the total witness of the whole church in all realms of life." He attacked what he described as "a false spirituality" in the Asian churches — "either separating themselves from the world or to limit their interest within a narrowly limited sphere of life called the spiritual realm". Asian churches must demonstrate not just "charitable diakonia" but above all "social diakonia", which meant to him a concrete concern on the part of churches and Christians for social justice, the structures of society, and the well-being of the nation. Takenaka was also sceptical about what he called "fishing industry evangelism" — "to transfer the fish from the dirty pond called 'world' to a clean and pure pool called 'church'". He was positive that "in this secularized society in which we live, mere

---

from Bangalore until January 1968 when it was renamed Asia Focus, now published under a group of staff editors from the EACC office in Bangkok. Church and Society provided an opportunity for Asian Christian discussions in the field of religion and society.

1. M.M. Thomas, "Some notes on a Christian interpretation of nationalism in Asia," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 46.
2. Niles, "A Church and its Selfhood," p. 78.

preaching in monologue and mere verbal proclamation are difficult and insufficient to communicate the Gospel."<sup>1</sup>

This strong insistence on the part of the Conference leaders upon Christian total involvement in society, and their readiness to question the relevance of preaching and the traditional goal of evangelism, heralded the demand for a re-examination of that understanding of the Church's task of the first period. Indeed, a renewed understanding is already discernible in a definition of the Gospel given by a study commission and received by the Assembly. This definition contains much of the understanding as expressed by Thomas, Niles and Takenaka; as it will be constantly referred to in the following pages, it is quoted in full below.

The churches of East Asia are called to be witnesses together to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What is this Gospel?

Firstly, it is a Gospel of redemption of the whole human race and of the whole created world. By his death and resurrection Jesus Christ has reconciled "all things to himself". His purpose is not to withdraw individual spirits one by one from their involvement with material things and human communities in order to set them in a purely "spiritual" relation to himself. Rather his goal is "to unite all things in Him". Therefore the churches' witness to the redemption of Christ must inevitably include the message of the renewal of society.

Secondly, it is a Gospel of the Kingship of Christ over the world. Therefore the meaning of world history, including that of modern Asian history, is to be discovered in that Kingship, which today is hidden and will be revealed at the end of time. The church must endeavour to discern how Christ is at work in the revolutions of contemporary Asia; releasing new creative forces, judging idolatry and false gods, leading peoples to decision for or against Him and gathering to himself those who respond in faith to Him, in order to send them back into the world to be witnesses to His Kingship. The Church must not only discern Christ in the changing life but be there in it, responding to him and making his presence and lordship known.

It is/ ....

---

1. Masao Takenaka, "A New Understanding of the World and the Need of Theological Renewal," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 37-39.

It is this that is the substance of the Church's witness amidst social change in Asia today. It is our common conviction that the Church should be a full participant in the new life of Asia, if she is to be effective in witnessing to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Our discussions as Christians about economics, politics and society are therefore conversations about Jesus Christ, that is to say, an attempt of faith to discern Him in the social change of our nations, and to discover what it means to respond to His call in relation to these changes.<sup>1</sup> [*Italics mine.*]

Undeniably, while not belittling Christ as "leading peoples to decision for or against Him and gathering to Himself those who respond in faith to him", the emphasis in this definition was on Christian social involvement. It was embodied in the idea of "discerning" how Christ is at work in the revolutions of contemporary Asia". Asian Christians were urged at Kuala Lumpur to take what was regarded as a more constructive approach to their whole understanding of the task of the Church in the East Asian situation. Indeed, it had already been stated in the working paper prepared for Assembly participants:

In Asia this is a period of social reconstruction and ... search for the true foundations and healthy goals of responsible personal and social living. The Church's main responsibility to society at such a time should be seen primarily as constructive.<sup>2</sup>

Kyaw Than expressed much the same thing at the beginning of the Assembly meeting when he said that the coming together of the Asian churches to the EACC was not "to set up a common front to enable us to live our own little lives and compare our own notes to SAFE-GUARD ourselves from the onslaughts of the world, but FOR reaching to the world".<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Newbigin reminded the delegates that "we misconceive the mission of the Church if we think of it simply as an operation carried out against a neutral or hostile background of world-history."<sup>4</sup> But the delegates did observe

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 60.

2. Toward Kuala Lumpur 1959, Chap. IV, p. 10.

3. U Kyaw Than, "The Mighty Works of God in our Tongues," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 13.

4. J.E. Lesslie Newbigin, "The Work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Asian churches," in A Decisive Hour ... (J.R. Mott Memorial Lectures), p. 20.

correctly the background against which God had now called Asian churches to play their part. They knew that

..... in the wake of independence there are two major drives in the contemporary life of the countries of East Asia: first, the groping of the peoples to discover a meaningful national selfhood; and second, their determination to secure rapid economic advance and social justice.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the changes in the understanding of the Gospel and of evangelism that can be detected at Kuala Lumpur and in subsequent years in the EACC may be seen as reflecting the attempts of some Asian Christians to respond to God's call to mission and to the quests of the Asian peoples. Asian Christians would have to recover the meaning of "being the church" with its own selfhood in East Asia. The mission of the Church would have to be widened into an encounter of the Gospel with the concrete political, social and economic needs and aspirations of the Asian peoples and nations. "The most stirring feature of the Kuala Lumpur conference," Norman Goodall commented, "was its recognition that the proclamation of the Gospel to all the world means more than the transmission of a familiar word in traditional terms across geographical frontiers ... But the frontiers were also seen as cultural, political, social, ethical;"<sup>2</sup> and so, from Kuala Lumpur, a call also went out to all Asian Christians — to discern how Christ was at work on these "frontiers" and to participate fully in His working — remembering also that "it is the church which lives on the frontier that will be ready to advance in strength".<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 61.

2. Norman Goodall, "John R. Mott and the East Asia Christian Conference," p. 16.

3. Ibid., p. 45.



Chapter One: THE RECOVERY OF THE MEANING  
OF THE CHURCH AND ITS SELFHOOD

---

In the post-independence years, as Section I has described, Asian nations found themselves going through a transitional period of establishing their new identity and selfhood. It was a time of nation-building. Traditional and old social structures, human values and attitudes to life were either passing away or being critically re-examined or absorbed into the new emerging societies. Many Asian churches found themselves going through a similar transition.

In the growth of the younger churches, Weber observed, there have been three main periods: the period of pioneers, the period of missionary guidance, and the period of crisis and renewal. The period of pioneers was over. The second period, he noted, was characterised by three features: "The concentration on the building-up of the membership, structures and ministries of the younger Church; the predominance of missionary institutions; and the prevailing other-worldly piety." The third period is the time when the younger churches, still bearing on their bodies the imported structures, attitudes, and forms of witness and service of the second period, have come face to face with "the end of the Vasco da Gama period and the growing non-Western self-expression, and ... the active participation of the younger Churches in the ecumenical movement".<sup>1</sup> And it is true that many Asian churches have found themselves in this third period of their growth. The pride and goals

---

1. Hans-Ruedi Weber, "The Younger Churches," in S.C. Neill and Hans-Ruedi Weber (eds.), The Layman in Christian History (London: SCM Press, 1963), pp. 339, 349, 352.



of Asian nationalism and the aspirations of the churches towards total mission and unity have brought many Asian Christians into a time of serious questioning about the validity and relevance of the imported elements in their churches. For the sake of the total mission of the Asian churches to an emerging new Asia, these imported elements would have to be critically re-examined, rejected entirely, or renewed.

At Kuala Lumpur, Asian church leaders noted the existence of this crisis and the urgent necessity of overcoming it. They believed the Christian Gospel to be "a Gospel of redemption of the whole human race and of the whole created world", and "of the Kingship of Christ over the world". The churches' witness to this redemption "must inevitably include the message of the renewal of society" and that "the Church should be a full participant in the new life of Asia".<sup>1</sup> The local congregation, therefore, must be "the manifestation of the whole Church in a locality ... its life and structure are determined by its mission". But in East Asia, they claimed, "the local congregation and its members are not fully aware of what they are or what their mission is ... Instead of being concerned with Christ's redeeming mission to the whole community, they are preoccupied with the preservation of their own life, as an exclusive community." The local congregations were said to tend to become "self-centred or inward-looking".<sup>2</sup>

Asian Christian leaders gathered at Kuala Lumpur also recognized that the "evangelization of Asia ... demands the fullest possible co-operation between churches and mission agencies and ... the urgent mobilization of the total available resources and their strategic use for the fulfilment of this task".<sup>3</sup> Yet, as they had heard in Niles's

---

1. Supra, p. 157.

2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 108.

3. Ibid., p. 88.

lecture, such co-operation and mobilization would not be forthcoming unless new relationships could be established among the Asian churches themselves and between them and their parent churches, mission agencies and other Christian bodies outside Asia. Clearly, there was a crisis of traditional Christian attitudes, church structures, forms of witness and service, relationships and selfhood in the Asian churches.

A study of the Kuala Lumpur Assembly report and its resolutions, as well as the programmes of work and their emphases in the next quadrennium, show clearly that both church leaders at Kuala Lumpur and the EACC leadership recognised that only a movement of renewal could overcome this crisis. This would have to begin from the grass-roots — the local congregations and the laity. Coupled with this the EACC was also entrusted with official responsibility for establishing such relationships among Asian churches themselves and between them and other Christian bodies outside Asia that the total mission of the Asian churches could be fulfilled and their selfhood be established. The Assembly adopted the report as "embodying the missionary policy of the Asian churches", and urged that "ecumenical consultation" and "processes" be provided and set up for achieving these aims.<sup>1</sup>

The process leading to the recovery of the church and its selfhood in East Asia had begun. It was not going to be an easy process, nor one without failures, misunderstandings and hard struggles. Yet it was an inescapable task facing the Asian churches of the post-independence years.

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 88-90.

1. The Renewal of the Ministry of the Laity  
and the Structures of the Local Congregation

Each congregation must know that it is put into the world by the Lord as His representative, and that it must therefore be chiefly concerned not with itself, but with the world, concerned to send its members out as witnesses, and to invite all men into the family of God. Its minister should be one who is seeking to train every member for this ministry in the world.<sup>1</sup>

This was the call contained in the official message from Kuala Lumpur to all member churches and councils of the EACC. Asian Christians were told that their "inward-looking" and "self-centred" local congregations "must be stirred by a fresh realization of their calling as the people of God and their responsibility towards the whole locality". For "it is the laity who are the church in the world, extending the boundaries of Christ's Kingdom."<sup>2</sup>

Takenaka agreed that there was a "reaffirmation of the ministry of the laity" at Kuala Lumpur. He hoped that it "might not become just an empty slogan".<sup>3</sup> However, the EACC leadership, Takenaka included, was determined to see that this should not be the case. Indeed, if the Gospel was defined at Kuala Lumpur as "redemption of the whole human race and of the whole created world", the missionary task of the Asian minority churches could not be fulfilled unless the whole Asian Christian people were to "go into every part of the life of our peoples ... to be witnesses for Christ in all these realms".<sup>4</sup>

The reaffirmation of the ministry of the laity was indeed carried forward with much attention at the enlarged Continuation Committee meeting

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. vi.

2. Ibid., pp. 108-109.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Enlarged Continuation Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference held at Bangalore, India, 7-12 November, 1961 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 57 (henceforward referred to as Bangalore 1961 Minutes).

4. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. vi.

of the EACC held at Bangalore, India, in November 1961. The second series of John R. Mott Lectures, delivered during this meeting by Takenaka, Alford Carleton and Kyaw Than, was largely concerned with this theme. They dealt with issues of communication of the Gospel, inherited patterns of congregational life, the narrow clerical view of the ministry of the Church, and ghettoism in Asian congregations. Takenaka pressed hard upon the meeting his conviction that the ministry of the Church in East Asia could be fulfilled only with the creation of "a new Christian style of living". The present style was "by and large individualistic and pietistic" and therefore "not relevant to the complex reality of modern society". He believed the new style should be based on a recognition of "the Church as the community of the first fruits of the new humanity". Quoting Paul's saying, "Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (I Cor. 15:20), he held that Christ "is the first fruits of the new creation and the new Adam and the new humanity. A small minority of Christians in Asia are called also the first fruits, representing the new humanity in their particular place of living." Takenaka claimed that this concept would "somehow transcend the notion of a majority or minority situation". It would give "a real qualitative re-presentation rather than one determined by quantitative number ... real strength and support to Christian presence and involvement in a concrete place of work and living in our Asian setting".<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Kyaw Than held that "in the contemporary situation [of East Asia] the laity is THE CHURCH IN DISPERSION — dispersed among the various sections of society ... They are placed there by God, to enable them to realize their true calling and vocation."

---

1. Masao Takenaka, "The First Fruits in Asia," in J.R. Fleming (ed.), Christ's Ministry — And Ours, The John R. Mott Memorial Lectures delivered before the Enlarged Continuation Committee of EACC at Bangalore, November, 1961 (Singapore: Tien Wah Press, 1962), pp. 11, 15.

But, he observed, "The great time for Christian mission is still ahead, when we talk about the witness of the laity." The urgent task was to stir up the Asian laity to an understanding of this significance. With the same concern as Takenaka's, Kyaw Than believed that "the Church as the scattered community may also prevent us from continuing with the attitudes of a minority group thinking always that we must stick together in the church as the gathered fellowship, in the midst of non-Christian society."<sup>1</sup>

But the call to the Asian laity and local congregations to go out in mission into the world did not only come out as a result of a renewed understanding of the cosmic nature of Christ's redemption, but was also conceived as one of the ways to a renewed understanding of "being the church" with its own selfhood in East Asia.

(a) The integral relatedness between worship, mission and renewal

The question of selfhood would never arise unless the laity of each congregation went out into the world in mission. For only then would they learn whether or not their present church structures, attitudes, forms of witness and service were relevant to the changing needs and situations of the locality and of East Asia as a whole. When they were clear about this, renewal would then become possible. But real renewal must be more than just changing certain forms and methods of communicating the Gospel to the people of a new Asia; it must be first of all a renewed discovery by church people themselves of the meaning of being the church with its own selfhood in the locality. Such fundamental renewal could only begin in worship — "at the only point possible — at the point where it stands before God". For only standing before Him,

---

U Kyaw Than, "The Christian Laity in Asia" in  
1. Christ's Ministry — And Ours (J.R. Mott Memorial Lectures), ed. J.R. Fleming, p. 55.

[can] the obstacles of self-centred pietism or religiosity or the dead end of a religious tradition, whether Western and Christian, or Asian and Buddhist, Hindu or animistic ... be overcome ... It is in such a moment of truth that men know what they are called to be and meant to be. Only then can they confess in penitence the futility of what they are and have been, receive the forgiveness promised to those who turn and repent, and in thankfulness and joy offer themselves in worship and obedience to the Lord who is making all things new, to be made new themselves, and to share in His renewing work in the world.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, Niles said, worship is really "the basis of a church's selfhood ... On it all growth in selfhood depends."<sup>2</sup> Worship can never be an act by itself. It must lead to mission; and mission leads to the renewal and growth of the selfhood of the church and the extension of the boundaries of Christ's Kingdom on earth. Takenaka agreed:

We participate in worldly affairs because we open our hearts to the Word of God which directs us to service and to witness in the world. In our total ministry of the Body of Christ, there is a rhythmic movement between listening to the Word of God and going out into the concrete place of response in the world.

Only in this "rhythmic movement" would Asian Christian men and women be "rooted in Christ, and rooted in Asian soil at the same time". Takenaka shared very much the concern of the time about indigenisation of the Christian faith in East Asia. However, he argued, "The starting point ... is not so much in the field of architecture or music or art, not even in theology, but in the field of the Christian style of living in contemporary Asia ... Indigenization will arise from within ... from the process of the wrestling participation of God's people in the present concrete reality of Asian society."<sup>3</sup>

The report on "The Asian Churches and their Witness in Worship" received at the Bangalore meeting expressed similar understanding about

- 
1. John R. Fleming and Ken Wright, Structures for a Missionary Congregation: The Shape of the Christian Community in Asia Today (Singapore: EACC, 1964), pp. 93-94.
  2. Niles, "A Church and its Selfhood," in A Decisive Hour ... (J.R. Mott Lectures), p. 74.
  3. Takenaka, "The First Fruits in Asia," in Christ's Ministry -- And Ours (J.R. Mott Lectures), pp. 19-20.



the integral relatedness of worship, mission and renewal. It recognised that the patterns and organisation of church life in Asian lands were "yet to be emancipated" from their "historical identification with Western culture". But,

if the church is to become indigenous, it will not be by cutting itself adrift from Western culture nor by re-shaping itself in terms of traditional culture, but by courageously relating itself to the patterns of an emerging culture. This cannot be an artificial process. It will happen only if Christians, in obedience to the Gospel, involve themselves in the dynamic cultural movements of our time.<sup>1</sup>

The East Asia Theological Commission on Worship confirmed that all these were indeed the "primary concerns" of many Asian churches. "As these churches of Asia face the question of their own 'selfhood', this question of indigenization — of worship, theology, obedience and social action — is inevitably an important one."<sup>2</sup> The Commission recognised that there were two main approaches to the question of indigenisation. The first, as typified by Takenaka, was by way of secular encounter. The second, coming from India, emphasised adaptation of local cultural forms. The Indian approach claimed to be based on principles inherent in the doctrines of creation, redemption and incarnation. The cultural heritage in any country "reflects the glory of God's creation". But "because of man's fallen condition", these "need to be redeemed or transformed" before they can be used in the Christian context. Further, such indigenisation was said to be "a natural corollary to the doctrine of the incarnation, according to which God not only became man, but expressed that manhood in terms of the time and place in which he lived".<sup>3</sup> Thus,

---

1. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 27.

2. J.R. Chandran and J.R. Fleming, Report of East Asia Theological Commission on Worship (Geneva: Division of Studies, WCC, August 1962), p. 1. This was also printed in J.R. Fleming (ed.), The South East Asia Journal of Theology, the organ of the Association of Theological Schools in S.E. Asia, Vol. 4, No. 4, April 1963 (Singapore: published quarterly by the ATSSEA), pp. 26-41.

3. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

the approach of adaptation was a justifiable and correct one.

However, the Commission also recognised, the differences between East and West and between nations and regions were being reduced by modern means of communication, education and technology. Even if adaptation was still necessary and would subsequently create diversity of forms, this need not affect the unity of Christians in Christ. For: "That which unites us," the Commission held, "is not our music or language or culture but Christ, and our response to Him in worship."

Thus, the heart of the indigenisation problem is not in an archaeological, "arty" or dilettante interest in Asian cultural forms past and present. It is based on the Church's understanding of God as Creator and Redeemer, and on the Church's will to obedience in the contemporary Asian situation both in relation to liturgy /formal acts of worship/ and leitourgia /service of the whole people of God in Christ to one another and to the world/.<sup>1</sup>

The Commission concluded: "A new understanding of the centrality, and of the breadth and scope of Christian worship in Asia offers hope of a renewal of the Church."<sup>2</sup>

To carry this renewed understanding of the witness of the laity into action, a long list of objectives and actual programmes was worked out at Kuala Lumpur to be undertaken by the newly formed Committee on the Witness of the Laity.<sup>3</sup> At Bangalore, V.G. Montes reported that a number of laity institutes and workshops had already been held in Hong Kong, the Philippines and Japan, and some were being planned for East Pakistan, Manila and other countries. The Continuation Committee agreed with, among others, proposals for (i) closer links between the Laity Committee and the NCCs in East Asia; (ii) a fellowship of the existing lay institutes and study centres for co-ordination and further advance of their work; (iii) the

---

1. Chandran and Fleming, Report of E. Asia Theological Commission on Worship, p. 13 (p. 9).

2. Ibid., p. 14.

3. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 121-126.

creation of mobile laity teams; (iv) the holding of a conference on Christians in the medical profession and consultations for Christian journalists and on Christian responsibility in rural life and industry; and (v) co-operation with the WCC in its study on the "Missionary Structure of the Congregation".<sup>1</sup>

But while the Laity Committee was administering these programmes during the years between the Kuala Lumpur Assembly in 1959 and the next assembly held at Bangkok in 1964, other EACC committees had also touched on these similar emphases in their own programmes. These were, as will be detailed more fully later in this chapter, the series of consultations on New Forms of Christian Service held in different parts of East Asia during the years from 1961 to 1962, the Asian Consultation on Inter-Church Aid in Hong Kong in 1963, and the Situation Conferences again held in different parts of East Asia during the year 1963. Indeed, the Working Committee gradually came to realize that the concerns of the Laity Committee were often overlapping with those of other committees. All these activities led to a decision in the Working Committee later in 1962 that during the period following the 1964 Assembly a major emphasis in the work of the EACC should be that of lay training. The Committee claimed their decision was called forth "by an increasingly widespread and growing conviction that if 'the church is to be the church' in the world of Asia today, the LAOS, the people of God, the laity, must be trained more effectively for their secular encounter in society." The type of training envisaged was "not that for ministries and service within the organised church ... but for a ministry of service and witness of lay Christians in the world."<sup>2</sup> But meanwhile, before the next

---

1. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, pp. 59-60, 62-63.

2. Minutes of the Working Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, Brisbane, Australia, November 19-22, 1962 (Bangkok: EACC), pp. 32-36 (referred to henceforward as Brisbane 1962 Minutes).

assembly was held, the study of "The Missionary Structure of the Congregation" had started and its report added even more weight to the call to the Asian churches for a renewed emphasis on the laity and a re-examination of their traditional and inherited church structures.

(b) "Structures for a Missionary Congregation"

As mentioned earlier, EACC's participation in this on-going WCC study was first proposed in Montes's report to the enlarged Continuation Committee meeting at Bangalore. However, with Montes's death in an air crash in 1962, this study did not get to a real start until John R. Fleming was put in charge during the Situation Conference held in Singapore in 1963. With papers sent from some parts of East Asia, together with information collected during his travels in various Asian countries — in particular from Ken Wright working in the industrial areas of North India — the report of this study was subsequently written by Fleming and published as a study book for the East Asian churches.

Fleming confirmed the fact that most Asian congregations were inward-looking and self-centred. They were congregations in "sociological" and "religious captivity", "on the fringes of the mainstream of Asian national life".<sup>1</sup> The unrealised potential, he said, in the Asian congregation existed largely because

... it has often misunderstood the Gospel of the Kingdom, and the Lordship of Christ, turning these into other-worldly messages of hope, having no relevance to this world. It has misunderstood its mission in and to the world as being to take people out of the world into the safety of an ark-like church, instead of seeing itself as a worshipping and sending structure, witnessing to God's reality and Christ's Lordship in the community.<sup>2</sup>

A study of the New Testament, he claimed, shows that there are three guiding principles regarding the forms of church structures. Firstly,

---

1. Fleming and Wright, Structures for a Missionary Congregation, pp. 57-58.

2. Ibid., p. 24.

"There is a flexibility of structures and a unity in diversity."

Secondly, the structures "are determined by the understanding a congregation has of itself, that is, its self-image, in the light of the Gospel, as 'church' in relation to what God has done in Jesus Christ, is doing and will do." Thirdly, they "are determined ... by reference to 'the outsider', meaning the people, individuals and communities, living in the culture and social organisation in which the Church exists."<sup>1</sup>

Fleming also held that renewal of the congregation could only begin in worship -- "at the point where it stands before God". "The Word, as God's living Word to His world, must be definitive, as a Word involving mission, just as the Sacrament must be understood as related to the Church's life in the world, and to the Church's nature as a pilgrim people." Therefore, he concluded, the forms of church structures are really "determined both by the Word and the World".<sup>2</sup>

The decision to change the title of the study from "The Missionary Structure of the Congregation" to "Structures for a Missionary Congregation" clearly reflects the growing understanding that mission to the world must be central in the life of the Asian congregations. Two hundred and fifty copies of this study were distributed for the use of the 1964 Assembly delegates; and this put increased pressure upon the Assembly in its call to the Asian churches to renewal.

(c) The meanings of "The Christian Community within the Human Community"

As decided by the Working Committee in 1962, the renewal of the ministry of the laity and thus the renewal of the Asian churches became one of the main concerns of the 1964 Assembly. The Assembly issued seven

---

1. Fleming and Wright, Structures for a Missionary Congregation, pp. 37-40.

2. Ibid., pp. 93, 98-99.



statements. The "basic statement" introduces the central theme of the Assembly, "The Christian Community within the Human Community," and sets out the proposed programmes of work for the next quadrennium. The remaining six were then grouped together under two headings: "The Church and the World" and "The Renewal of the Church." In the two statements, "The Call to Holy Living" and "The Call to Renewal in the Churches of Asia," the integral relatedness between worship, mission and renewal was reaffirmed. "'Holy Living' ... in the first place ... means being set apart from the world to be constantly confronted by the Holiness of God; and in the second place, it means a total commitment to participation in God's purposes in the world."<sup>1</sup> "'The Call to Renewal' ... is being felt both as a result of the pressures of the Word of the Gospel as well as of the pressures of the world in which the churches of Asia are set."<sup>2</sup>

These two interpretations truly reflected the central concern of the EACC's call to the Asian Christian laity. At Bangkok, this was projected as basically the relationship between the Christian community and the human community. The Christian community (the Christian laity) was conceived as being "within" the human community — in the world, not out of it. This, therefore, raised the question of the meaning of their presence in the human community. To the Assembly, the answer was clear — whether the Christian community is a majority or a minority, "Christ is present with them and they represent in the world the presence of Christ." If Christians do represent the presence of Christ, Asian Christians must need "to become more closely aware of the meaning and implications of the CHRISTIAN PRESENCE in the situations and occupations in which they and their fellow-men are placed by God."<sup>3</sup> It is, therefore,

---

1. The Christian Community within the Human Community, containing statements from the Bangkok Assembly of the EACC, Feb.-March 1964, Minutes, Part 2 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 46 (referred to henceforward as Bangkok 1964 Statements).

2. Ibid., p. 51.

3. Ibid., pp. 1-2.



this representation as Christ's presence, as well as the knowledge that He is at work, that have made the witness of the laity and Christian discernment of what He is doing in the world so vitally important in the total mission of the Church. The Gospel as defined at Kuala Lumpur in 1959 acknowledged the cosmic nature of Christ's redemption and therefore the need for all Christians to discern and participate fully in His working in the world. At Bangkok with this strong emphasis on "Christian presence" and penetration and the Christian community as "within" the human community the witness of the laity in society and nation was invested with even greater significance.

Examination of the relationship between the Christian community and the rest of the human community raised another important question, not specifically mentioned in the "basic statement". This was the question of the selfhood of the Christian community in relation to the human community. Thus, under the heading of "The Renewal of the Church", there were not only statements on "The Call to Holy Living" and "The Call to Renewal in the Churches of Asia", but also three other statements on "Asian Missions", "Confessional Families and the Churches in Asia" and "Relations with the Roman Catholic Church" which, together with the first two, were actually concerned about the whole issue of being the church in mission and having its own selfhood both in the One Church Universal and in the human community of peoples and nations of East Asia. As the present chapter goes on to show, this question of selfhood proved to be another of the principal concerns of the 1964 Assembly.

(d) Signs of renewal

As a consequence, great importance at Bangkok was thus placed upon lay training. The Assembly provided for its member-churches

some detailed recommendations for lay training programmes.<sup>1</sup> There was a more balanced recognition that although the primary aim of these programmes was to equip the laity to be an effective Christian presence in the world, "training for service within the organised church cannot be neglected". Furthermore, ordained ministers would have to be included in the programmes since they were "part of the Laos" and they had to "take first responsibility for lay training itself".<sup>2</sup> This recognition certainly reflects one growing awareness of that time, that a well-trained ordained ministry and high standards of theological education were vital to a renewal of the Asian churches. The EACC, the Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia (ATSSEA), the Foundation for Theological Education (or FTE, formerly Nanking Theological Seminary Board of Founders), and the Theological Educational Fund of WCC, were gradually coming into close association with each other in order to promote a new pattern of theological education and thinking relevant to the changing situations. To start these lay training programmes and to usher in a movement for renewal, the Assembly also recommended that the EACC itself might take "certain central initiatives" to help bring these into being.

But a 1964 Assembly statement also claimed that "signs of renewal ... are already visible in the churches in Asia":

The churches in Asia are hearing the call to renewal ... There is a theological awakening which is directed towards the discovery of the relation between the truths of God ... and the torments of the Asian world ... Churches are finding one another ... devising ways of living and acting together ... The command to mission is also being heard with a new compulsion so that, besides dedication to the task of evangelism in one's own country, first steps are also being taken for engagement in the larger missionary enterprise ... There is a growing sense of the implications of Christian stewardship and responsibility of laymen for Christian witness in the world.<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 2-7.
  2. Ibid., p. 3; cf. supra, p. 168.
  3. Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 57-58.

Indeed, earlier, in his report of the study on "Structures for a Missionary Congregation", Fleming had claimed that the very existence of the EACC, its reaffirmation of the ministry of the laity, its search for new forms of Christian service and church structures, were all "signs of renewal — in thought and study". There were also "signs of renewal — in experiment and action". In many Asian countries, he observed, new experiments in evangelism, Christian social service and witness, worship and theological training were being attempted. In addition, there was the growth of laity institutes and study centres of various kinds in different parts of East Asia.<sup>1</sup> He believed these were "real signs", even though they might "not point to great accomplishments". But they were "evidence of a new awareness ... and ... of the Church's growing sensitivity in regard to its missionary calling". There was "the growing conviction that congregations that have rediscovered their missionary nature and calling stand in need of discovering new structures."<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, the EACC had taken many "central initiatives" in order to help strengthen this new awareness and to usher in a real renewal among the Asian churches. These initiatives were the many consultations, conferences, and programmes sponsored or convened by the EACC during the years following Bangkok as well as those held before it. Its call to renewal had laid so much emphasis upon Christians being the church in mission to all realms of Asian life that, subsequently, the Laity Committee could be dissolved in the 1968 Assembly and its concerns placed on the Committee on Church and Society and a new Committee on Christian Education and Lay Training.<sup>3</sup> Just how effective all these initiatives

- 
1. For a list of these lay training and study centres, see Centres of Renewal, for Study and Lay Training (Geneva: Dept. on the Laity, WCC, 1964) pp. 54-61.
  2. Fleming and Wright, Structures for a Missionary Congregation, pp. 6-68.
  3. Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 56-57.

of the EACC turned out to be, will be examined in the course of this section. But meanwhile, at Bangkok in 1964, Asian Christians could observe: "He is using the secular movements and events which are taking place in Asia with such rapidity and in such strength as to make it impossible for the churches to remain as they are."<sup>1</sup>

The pressure of the world and the pressure of the Word had clearly brought about a response from many Asian Christians leading to a gradual recovery of the meaning and implications of being the church in East Asia. But this new awareness for a renewal of the ministry of the laity and the structures of the local congregation was only the first step in this gradual recovery. The next was to be the renewal of the forms of Christian mission and service.

## 2. The Renewal of the Forms of Christian Mission and Service

The machinery set up at Kuala Lumpur for the main purpose of assisting Asian churches in their task of "the evangelization of Asia" was the Committee on Inter-Church Aid for Mission and Service (CICAMS).

It is important to note that the Committee was for "mission AND service". This was the understanding of the Kuala Lumpur Assembly — that mission and service were integral to one another in the given "total commission" of the Church.<sup>2</sup> In his address to the Assembly Alan Brash repeatedly emphasised this integral relationship and the need for inter-dependence between churches in order to carry out this "total commission". The Great Commission (Mtt. 28:19), he agreed, was the "sure foundation" on which "we have preached and planned and acted, always with our objective

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 58.

2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 91.

that process of 'making disciples' and 'witnessing', calling men everywhere to an experience of 'new birth' through Christ, into 'eternal life'". He believed this was the process

... for which we believe the Church was created. By its evidence within the Church at any time or place the Church is judged. It is this with which we here are peculiarly concerned, because we are faced with the greatest evangelistic task of the Church's history. This is the mission of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, in its understanding of the Gospel, the Assembly also held that "Christ is at work in ... East Asia ... leading people to decision for or against Him and gathering to Himself those who respond in faith to Him."<sup>2</sup> This understanding of mission came very near to the understanding of evangelism of the first period.

But, Brash said, alongside the Great Commission there were Bible passages (John 10:10 and Mtt. 25) in which "He Christ warned us that our admission to heaven would not depend upon an activity called 'witnessing' but upon certain activities of loving service to those in need". Therefore, he argued:

So, to the task of "witnessing", and of "making disciples" must be added all the variety of forms of expressing love and compassion toward those in need ... This is not ADDED to the mission of the Church, it is in fact all part of the one mission ... It is an essential part of the "witnessing" and "making disciples".<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the responsibilities of CICAMS were agreed to consist of two "realms: mission and service". In the realm of mission, the responsibilities were:

To keep before the attention of the member churches the total missionary task in Asia, to awaken their concern for it, and to help them in discharging it ...

To facilitate the participation of the member churches in the total world-wide missionary task ...

To/...

- 
1. Alan A. Brash, "The Mission of the Church and New Forms of Interdependence," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 81.
  2. Supra, p. 156.
  3. Brash, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

To provide opportunities for the study, re-assessment and re-organisation of the missionary work of Asian churches and their related mission boards ...

In the realm of service, they were:

The exchange of workers between the Churches in Asia.  
Ecumenical scholarships.

Extension of the Ecumenical Loan Fund Scheme.

Co-operation with the WCC Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees (DICASR) in regard to service programme, relief and emergency programmes, project list, service to refugees.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after CICAMS started operations, there were encouraging signs of this interdependence between Asian churches in the realms of both mission and service. In the former, during the years from 1958 to 1961, the Committee found itself assisting evangelistic teams to travel from one Asian country to another. Some churches began to turn to the EACC for assistance in recruiting missionaries and for exchange of personnel between churches and countries. A further great encouragement must have been the survey prepared by the Committee which showed that there were about two hundred Asian missionaries of various kinds sent out by EACC member-churches to various countries of Asia and a few outside Asia. In the realm of service, the scholarship scheme was launched successfully with offers of free places from twenty-four colleges in the region. The Ecumenical Church Loan Fund had started operations in Burma and Japan. The Committee had also entered into co-operation with the WCC DICASR in some service programmes in East Asia, such as service to refugees, emergency appeals, youth work camps and the preparation of the WCC Project List to be circulated among WCC and EACC member-churches for ecumenical personnel and financial support.<sup>2</sup> The EACC also accepted responsibility from the "Fellowship of the Least Coin" for disbursing the funds collected yearly by the latter among Christian women in East Asia and other parts of

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 91-93.

2. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, pp. 44-46, 52, 88-91, 106-114.



the world, for selected projects of evangelism and service in all continents. Thus, the Fellowship, which was founded at the Asian Conference of Church Women held in Hong Kong in 1958, had added a global dimension to the EACC's work of mission and service.<sup>1</sup> The desire of Asian Christians for concrete expressions of united action in evangelism was therefore at long last being realised in and through the CICAMS.

But from Kuala Lumpur, as described earlier, there came also the call for a renewal of the witness of the laity and the structures of the local congregation. The call to Asian Christian laymen was for them to become the church in mission in the world. In addition, the Kuala Lumpur definition of the Gospel spoke of the renewal of society as included in the redemption of Christ and thus the necessity of Christian social involvement. There was a desire growing and spreading among Asian Christians then to understand anew the nature and forms of the task of the Church in their lands. It can be observed that efforts in this direction were first made in the Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service held in different parts of East Asia during the years from 1960 to 1962.

(a) New forms of Christian service — "Diakonia"

The Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service were held on the initiative of the Kuala Lumpur Assembly: "In the light of the plans for national welfare and development the Christian church must reassess its traditional service institutions and find new ways suitable to the new situation."<sup>2</sup> The Working Committee meeting in Hong Kong in 1960

---

1. Minutes of the Working Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, Hong Kong, April 20-24, 1960 (Bangkok: EACC), pp. 13-15 (referred to henceforward as Hong Kong 1960 Minutes).

2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 73.

approved the holding of these as "service surveys". They were different, Brash said, "from the Strategy Conference [i.e. the "Situation Conferences" held later in 1963] which is concerned with the total enterprise of the Churches, including their evangelistic and worship life, whereas this proposal concerns only the service activities of the Churches."<sup>1</sup>

Organised jointly by the CICAMS and the Committee on Church and Society and in co-operation with local NCCs, these consultations were held respectively at Nasrapur, India, in October 1960 (for Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan); at Atami, Japan, in March 1961; at Quezon City in the Philippines in April 1961; at Onyong, South Korea, in April 1962; and at Sukabumi, Indonesia, in November 1962.

Some common recommendations and understandings were discernible in these consultations. Christian service was to be directed at human need wherever it was found and not confined to Christians. In view of the fact that the state had in most Asian nations taken responsibility for the general welfare of the people, services rendered by existing Christian institutions such as hospitals, schools and other social works would have to be reviewed so that resources could be channelled to new and pioneer works. More attention was to be paid to the needs of rural communities and efforts made towards human community development. Co-operation with non-Christians in the work of social service was urged. Relief programmes carried out in times of emergency should eventually be replaced by programmes of rehabilitation. Forms of service should be defined ecumenically so that the overall resources could be most effectively directed at the total need, and service programmes must be planned in the locality. Indeed, this was one of Brash's main concerns during his term of office as Secretary for the CICAMS — that such plans

---

1. Hong Kong 1960 Minutes, p. 44.

and decisions should be made by the Asian churches themselves or the EACC and not "by people on the other side of the world" — the WCC-DICASR.

All these were necessary and realistic recommendations in view of the changing political, social and economic situations in each Asian nation. They would certainly mean, too, some fundamental changes in the forms, attitudes and strategy of the supporting missions or confessional agencies and of the Asian churches themselves. However, the consultations were characterised not only by these recommendations but also by their strong emphasis upon Christian service as including Christian social and political actions. These actions were regarded not only as an essential part of Christian service but also as the most effective means of Christian participation in the struggle of the Asian peoples for social and economic development.

Thus, at Nasrapur, the Consultation held, the church could "no longer think of service ... as something entirely divorced from state activity, and must be continually aware of the meaning and importance of political action".<sup>1</sup> Brash told the delegates that he agreed that "social diakonia" formed a part of the Christian service. For without it, "charitable diakonia" would shrink "into being something rather petty and hypocritical". "Christians must not only be concerned with helping the individual in trouble, but also with making our impact on the kind of state, and kind of community which is being built up." He criticised "the mission compound strategy, which ... directs the new convert out of his community" as one of the "inherited strategies in the life of our Churches today".<sup>2</sup> Indeed, some delegates believed, "We have too often used service as a means of establishing the superiority of our Lord Jesus Christ, or of ourselves as Christians so that others would join us.

---

1. New Forms of Christian Service and Participation, Nasrapur, October 1960, report of a consultation for Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan (Kottayam: SCM Press, 1960, for EACC-CICAMS), p. 6.

2. Alan A. Brash, "The new strategy of Christian service in Asia," Nasrapur Consultation Report, 1960, pp. 36-39.

This is false evangelism as well as false service."<sup>1</sup>

At Quezon City, M.M. Thomas urged the delegates to distinguish "social service" from "social action". The former was concerned mainly with programmes of relief and counselling. The latter was about the formation of social, economic and political structures and understanding of cultural values in emerging new Asian societies. He held: "Churches cannot work for ... social service goals without becoming involved in the ... goals of social action. Both must be kept together."<sup>2</sup>

As at Nasrapur, the consultation held at Quezon City claimed that Filipino Protestant churches "have failed to see that involvement in politics is a part of the Christian witness. They have tended to conceive of salvation in narrow, pietistic, individualistic and moralistic terms." "Too often our service is TO SAVE sinners rather than TO SERVE those for whom Christ died. Our service often becomes a saving action because of our minority consciousness ... We judge the validity of our service in terms of the numbers it adds to our rolls." The consultation urged that "social action committees" be formed by "denominations or by inter-church agencies" whose functions "would include studying social and political issues, publishing study materials, making pronouncements on public issues, providing training for leaders, and encouraging the formation of social action committees in local churches."<sup>3</sup>

At Onyong, Won Yong Kang, who became secretary for the Laity Committee in 1963 and a Vice-Chairman of the EACC from 1968, blamed the "puritan

---

1. Francis Ah Mya and Murray Rogers, "What is Christian Service?" in Nasrapur Consultation Report 1960, p. 32.

2. M.M. Thomas, "The changing scene in Asia," New Forms of Christian Service in the Philippines, report of the Consultation called by the East Asia Christian Conference and held April 1-4, 1961, in Quezon City, Philippines (Manila: EACC-CICAMS and Committee on Church and Society), p. 12.

3. Ibid., pp. 21, 24, 25.

morality and conservative theological outlook" of the "Evangelical Movement" of the past for contributing to the failure of the Korean churches to cope with post-war revolutionary conditions in their country, as a consequence of which these churches "had tended to adopt an attitude of resignation". Christian division in Korea, Won argued, was in no small measure due to this kind of conservative outlook — "pietism", "moralism", and "other-worldliness". "The repentance required of the Korean churches today," he said, "is for their failure to respond to God's call to serve in the midst of the revolutionary changes."<sup>1</sup> Bae Ho Hahn noted, in his evaluation of the consultation, that all committee reports pointed out "that the churches in Korea have misled themselves by believing that Christian witness and service are two separate things and that the Church and society are two entities which should be kept separate."<sup>2</sup> But Christian social involvement did come out as the dominant emphasis at Onyang. One committee suggested that in the field of Christian social service there should be "a shift of emphasis from temporary acts of serving to actions of restoring human rights and establishing social, economic, justice through the implementation of sound social policies". Another claimed: "As Christians we cannot leave aside politics because this is one agency which plays an increasingly large role in influencing the lives of the people in our society. Rather, politics is the means which could be used to create the conditions for achieving the goals we are striving for today." And still another: "At the turning point of a society, prophetic religion rather than conservative religion is demanded."<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Won Yong Kang, "The First Step Forward Toward the Renewal of Churches in Korea," New Forms of Christian Service and participation in Korea, the report of the Consultation held April 13-16, 1962, in Onyang, Korea (Bangalore: CLS Press for EACC, CICAMS and CCS), pp. 2-3.

2. Bae Ho Hahn, "The Korean Church and Society in New Perspective," ibid., p. 4.

3. In ibid., pp. 11, 15, 50.



At Sukabumi, similarly, it was denied that Christian service consisted only of acts done out of charity: "It includes the struggle to establish social justice and to bring prosperity in society as a whole. The Churches are to advise their members to be active in struggling and working in all fields of society in solidarity with the life of their nation."<sup>1</sup>

Takenaka was therefore correct when he reported to the WCC New Delhi Assembly that one lesson learnt by the Asian Christians in this study on New Forms of Christian Service was the "increasing need of the churches to develop SOCIAL diakonia". As he explained:

This means we must not only express CHARITABLE diakonia, that is to say action directed towards the result of social disease or injustice, but we must also develop action directed towards the cause of social disease and injustice. The former is a service to meet the immediate needs of people as charity, while the latter is a service which consists in taking part in the formation of social policy and of structures which will provide the basis for the healthy development of human personality ... For this purpose we need strong organs of thinking and action in our churches on the local, national and world level.<sup>2</sup>

The New Delhi Assembly echoed this with the statement that while preaching was "all bound together" in the wholeness of the Christian message, "to proclaim the whole Gospel must mean to take seriously the secular causes of men's inability to hear or respond to our preaching ... Witness to the Gospel must therefore be prepared to engage in the struggle for social justice."<sup>3</sup>

It is clear that these consultations were more than just "service surveys". Their reports have shown that they were in fact positive

- 
1. Christian Service in the Revolution, the report of the Consultation held November 14-18, 1962, in Sukabumi, Indonesia (Bangalore: CLS Press for EACC, CICAMS and CCS), p. 2.
  2. Masao Takenaka, "Call to Service, the Service of the Church in the Changing World today," ER XIV, No. 1 (October 1961), p. 171.
  3. W.A. Visser't Hooft<sup>(ed.)</sup> The New Delhi Report: The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1961 (New York: Association Press, 1962), p. 86.



attempts towards a renewed understanding of the Asian churches' task in the social and economic development of the nations. Each consultation undertook the task of examining and delivering judgements on certain major political, social and economic issues in the nation, and active involvement in society was recommended as the relevant Christian response. Social and political actions were regarded not only as an essential part of Christian service but also as the means by which Christian participation could make itself effective in changing the structure of society and thus getting rid of the causes of social disease and injustice. Indeed, this strong emphasis on Christian social involvement was only in line with the understanding of the Gospel as defined at Kuala Lumpur: "The Church should be a full participant in the new life of Asia" — "redemption of Christ must include the renewal of society" — "our discussions as Christians about economics, politics, and society are therefore conversations about Jesus Christ".<sup>1</sup> Evidently, too, it was to Christian laymen in particular that this appeal was addressed — this call for Christian social and political actions as concrete expressions of their renewed consciousness of being the church in mission in all realms of Asian life. They were asked "to think of Christian service more in terms of the involvement of the laity, and therefore of the local church, in the process of nation-building".<sup>2</sup>

But in their keen desire to be involved in the struggles for social and economic development, these consultations do not seem to have examined sufficiently the role that could be played by evangelism in these same struggles. Their criticisms about "pietism", "moralism", "conservatism" and "other-worldliness" and their scepticism on certain traditional

---

1. Supra, p. 157.

2. Fleming and Wright, Structures for a Missionary Congregation, p. 64.

practices of evangelism gave the impression that social involvement alone was the appropriate Christian response, and led to a consequent neglect of evangelism. With Christian social and political involvement so much emphasised, these consultations appeared to some to have treated evangelism and service as unrelated to each other and therefore in a sense to have denied the integral relationship affirmed in Kuala Lumpur when CICAMS was formed. Dissatisfaction over what was believed to be a one-sided emphasis on social involvement was soon to be heard, for, as will be described later, this criticism became a matter for open debate in the First Asian Consultation on Inter-Church Aid.

But meanwhile, the "Situation Conferences" were being held. The major achievement of these conferences was to agree on joint action for the fulfilment of the total mission of the churches in East Asia. However, warnings against over-emphasis on social involvement were also heard at these conferences.

(b) Joint action for mission — its meaning and implications

At Kuala Lumpur, the commission report on "The Missionary Obligation of Asian Churches" had been adopted by the Assembly as "embodying the missionary policy of Asian Churches". This "policy" contained much of D.T. Niles's concern as expressed in his lecture, "A Church and its 'Selfhood'," on the relationships among Asian churches themselves and between them and their parent churches and other Christian bodies outside Asia in the total task of the Church in East Asia. The Assembly also agreed that it was the responsibility of the EACC to achieve such relationships, which would be set within the concept of the total mission of the Church, for the strengthening of the whole Christian enterprise in a country, and for expediting self-support in the Asian churches. Thus

one of the resolutions attached to this "policy" urged that EACC should

... initiate ways of helping Asian churches and mission boards and agencies through National Christian Councils and Missionary Councils to face together their total task with a view to deploying the total resources available in the most strategic way for the fulfilment of the mission.<sup>1</sup>

The initiatives to be taken by the EACC were set out in detail in a commission report on "The Asian Churches and the Church's Mission" received at the enlarged Continuation Committee meeting at Bangalore. The report first reaffirmed the functions of the CICAMS among the member-churches. It also showed much concern about the problems of remunerating, receiving and training Western missionaries coming to serve in the region, and the importance of the witness of Christian laymen abroad. But evidently, to the Committee, the more important part of this report was "The World Confessional Development and the Younger Churches", with its recommendations adopted "for action by the EACC".<sup>2</sup>

The report recognised that confessional consciousness had increased with the growth of the ecumenical movement. For the younger churches, the "promise and opportunity" of world confessional development was "to lift Christians out of local isolation", "stimulate missionary concern and outreach", and "protect small groups of Christians from dangerous introversion and narrow nationalism". But such "promise and opportunity" was outweighed by "fear and anxiety"; the Continuation Committee explained:

The very vitality of these confessional loyalties often creates serious obstacles in the life of the younger churches. However good the intention, it seems that the expression of world confessionalism, in increasingly complex institutional structures, results in the perpetuation and reinforcement of patterns of paternalism and continued exercise of control.<sup>3</sup>

The Committee regarded the world confessional developments as

- 
1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 90.
  2. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, pp. 32-42.
  3. Ibid., p. 39.

obstructions in the movement among the Asian churches towards mission in unity and the selfhood of the churches. They had created a tension and become "a matter of serious concern".<sup>1</sup> Thus one of the recommendations adopted "for action by the EACC" was that "situation conferences" were to be held in different centres within the region so that the whole matter of the total mission of the Asian churches in relation to these developments could be first examined carefully by the Asian churches in different countries. Following these, a major conference would then be held.<sup>2</sup>

Three such Situation Conferences accordingly took place in three different cities during the months of February and March, 1963: in Madras, for Pakistan, India and Ceylon; in Singapore, for Thailand, Burma, Singapore, Malaya, Borneo, Sarawak, Indonesia, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand; and in Tokyo, for Okinawa, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The main considerations behind the planning of each of these conferences were: (i) fulfilment of the total mission in a given geographical area; (ii) the effect of the growth and development of world confessional movements upon the life and witness of the churches in Asia; and (iii) the missionary enterprise of a church beyond the frontiers of its own situation. Their reports were edited by Fleming and published under a single title, "One People — One Mission," which truly reflects the central theme of these conferences: "The Common Life and Mission of God's People in Asia Today."<sup>3</sup>

Change was the dominant theme in all three Situation Conferences. The common recognition was that the whole region was going through revolutionary changes. Therefore, churches must examine and renew their

---

1. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 40.

2. Ibid., p. 41.

3. Situation Conferences Report, p. 52.

existing structures, strategy and relationships with one another to meet the new challenges of the "Asian Revolution". As with the Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service, all three conferences asked for a restructuring of local congregational life and a re-examination of the relevance of the services rendered by existing forms of Christian institutions. Besides the repetition of this demand, the main concern of the Situation Conferences was the question of Joint Action for Mission (JAM) and its denominational and confessional implications.

The reports of the conferences show no serious investigation into the theological basis of the central theme. While the Singapore Conference, in regard to the question of preservation of traditional Christian institutions, did recommend that "the Church as a pilgrim people" be a guiding principle in determining policy, it did not explore any further the meaning and implications of this image in relation to other aspects of Christian witness and service.<sup>1</sup> This was left to the leaders of the EACC, notably in the addresses given by C.H. Hwang of Taiwan, and D.T. Niles.

Hwang argued, "If Christ is our life, and our life is Christ's, then the life of God's people must be a common life. It can neither be 'more or less' than a common life because it is rooted and derived from one common Lord." Since Christ died for all, "to live in Him can only mean to live for Him and for all for whom He died." For this, "the mission of God's people must be a common mission." And this became the chief concern of the Situation Conferences — "How is the common mission of God's people to be translated into concrete action in today's Asia?" To answer this question, the "unity", "witness" and "service" of the churches must become a great concern to Christians in East Asia, for these three were "inseparable and integral components of our common life and mission".<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Situation Conferences Report, p. 75.

2. C.H. Hwang, "God's People in Asia today," ibid., pp. 8, 17.

Niles showed a distinctive understanding of his own. "Churches must share a common life, all in each place and all throughout the world, so that the world may recognize the one mission." But what is this "one mission"? Niles replied:

The mission of Jesus Christ is a continuing mission weaving together the many strands of human history into one movement. Jesus prayed that the Church may be one that the world may believe in this one mission. Were the object of evangelism simply to win faith in Jesus Christ, the division of the Churches might not matter. But the object of evangelism is so to win men to faith in Jesus Christ that they will become active participants in the central missionary movement which binds human history together. It is this participation which is hindered by the separateness of the Churches.<sup>1</sup>

Niles believed Christ's salvation was "a salvation of the whole universe. It is not just a salvation of the Christian community. It is a salvation of human history." Therefore, "secular history must be taken seriously," and "the nation is a particularity which we must take seriously" in talking about the Church and its unity.<sup>2</sup>

Hwang and Niles were two of the chief theological exponents in the circle of EACC leadership. More of their theological contributions will be mentioned later in the course of this section. Here it is sufficient to note that they also became the chief EACC spokesmen and representatives in the consultations held with leaders of mission agencies and world confessional organisations later on.

Joint Action for Mission was accepted in principle in all three conferences as the next step forward in fulfilling the mission of the churches in East Asia. Its meaning, as typified at the Madras Conference, was understood to be "the action of the whole people of God in a place for the fulfilment of the total mission of the Church in that place. Churches are called upon to act together as one body, for they are one in Christ even in their separateness."<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. D.T. Niles, "The Ecumenical Task," Situation Conferences Report, pp. 20-21.
  2. Ibid., p. 24.
  3. Situation Conferences Report, p. 57.



As described in Section II, the basic idea of JAM was quite familiar to Asian Christians. Chronologically its "true precursor", as Niles observed, had been "partnership in obedience" at Whitby (1947).<sup>1</sup> This idea was developed further at Lund in 1952 when churches were asked "whether they should not act together in all matters except those things in which deep differences of conviction compel led them to act separately".<sup>2</sup> Again, at the WCC Assembly at New Delhi, the idea of JAM had been reinforced with the concept of the visible unity of the Church as "all in each place".<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Newbigin regarded the EACC's concern for the deployment of the total resources available for the fulfilment of mission as an important contribution which had helped the WCC develop further the idea of JAM at New Delhi.<sup>4</sup> So it was that the Singapore Conference readily agreed that in their area there was "a vast area where we are free to think, pray, plan, and act together", and that "a fundamental condition of advance in Joint Action for Mission is that there must be full recognition not only of the Church as a universal community, but also of the Church as the people of God in each place." It urged mission agencies to give "priority to programmes and actions expressing the common mind of all the churches in the area". By supporting projects on a basis of unilateral consultation only, such agencies could "unintentionally do great damage to the Christian cause".<sup>5</sup> Thus, Madras put concretely, JAM "asks of Churches and Mission Agencies:

(1) real sharing and complete frankness about successes and failures, and about resources, physical, financial and in persons;

- 
1. Situation Conferences Report, p. 103.
  2. Tomkins (ed.), Third World Conference on Faith and Order, Lund 1952, p. 16.
  3. Visser't Hooft (ed.), The New Delhi Report, pp. 116-118.
  4. Lesslie Newbigin, "Mission to Six Continents," in Harold E. Fey, The Ecumenical Advance, p. 187.
  5. Situation Conferences Report, pp. 76, 78.

(2) agreement about priorities which will certainly involve hard decisions and conflicts of power;

(3) the putting of resources of manpower and money from any one country and from outside it at the disposal of a denomination or united body made responsible for a piece of work with no expectation of denominational dividend or return;

(4) the trusting of each other in our separate denominations to do the particular tasks allotted to us. Without this trust Joint Action is impossible.<sup>1</sup>

JAM, therefore, "underlines the need for radical change in the structures and attitudes of churches, both in East and West, and mission agencies, and demands real partnership between them in the Church's mission. Madras also made it clear that JAM is "in no sense a substitute for, or an alternative to Church Union, but is a challenge to the churches and their supporting agencies in specific situations to give the call to mission priority over confessional interest." It also recognised that "every venture into the field of Joint Action, must of necessity, render more urgent the task of Church Union."<sup>2</sup> All three conferences foresaw that JAM could only be achieved when all parties concerned were prepared to go through "strains and stress, struggles and pain", "adjustment and re-education". But they would "condemn [themselves] spiritually to stagnation so long as [they] refused to move forward in this direction".<sup>3</sup> It was also well recognised that there would be many questions which would need to be further discussed and clarified among all parties concerned. The Tokyo Conference frankly admitted that there was "no easy or immediate solution".<sup>4</sup> Asian churches were therefore urged to give their support to the consultations which were being convened in relation to this problem by the WCC and the EACC.

---

1. Situation Conferences Report, p. 58.

2. Ibid., pp. 57, 61.

3. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

4. Ibid., p. 71.

(c) The debate on evangelism and social concern

Joint Action was taken as the appropriate strategy for mission at the Situation Conferences. But there was no official or clear definition given to Mission. In one of the Eight Questions put to each conference for its discussion, it was stated that the churches' "obedience to Jesus Christ" always called churches to certain activities; these were said to include "the worship of God through Jesus Christ, real fellowship with our fellow Christians, service in all kinds of ways to men round about us, and bringing men to know Jesus Christ for themselves." Another question asked whether there were signs "that the churches are actually growing, both numerically and in their effective encounter with, and penetration into, the society in which they are set".<sup>1</sup> But the understanding which came nearest to a definition of the goal of mission is found in the Madras Conference: "The Church's concern for mission is its concern that the love of God made known in Jesus Christ may be so commended to men in the power of the Holy Spirit that they will turn to Him and accept Him as their Saviour and their Lord."<sup>2</sup>

It appears, therefore, that mission was taken to consist of both evangelism and service. However, there is also discernible in the reports and addresses of these conferences a strong emphasis on social involvement. The Madras Conference urged that laymen must be trained "in terms of their fundamental vocation to be the Church in the world of their work and everyday life".<sup>3</sup> The Tokyo Conference noted the significant growth of church membership in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea, but confessed that "in large measure our churches have not been where the people are.

---

1. Situation Conferences Report, pp. 47-48.

2. Ibid., p. 53.

3. Ibid., p. 57.

Evangelism has often meant withdrawing individuals from their involvement in society."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Won Yong Kang said at Tokyo:

We are living in a world in which political, economic, cultural, and other social aspects are inseparably related to the life of the Church. These realms are not something that exist apart from the life of the Church. They are the realms for the confession of our faith, where we are called to witness and to serve.

But he doubted whether "the existing forms and patterns of the Christian ministry, compounded of escapism, pietistic ethics, and individualism", could fulfil the task of mission,<sup>2</sup> and asked whether indeed "it is a sound strategy for us to continue the old practice of evangelism directed to the construction of more churches and to bringing more people in front of the pulpit for a moment of 'repentance', while the masses take an indifferent attitude to the Christian Church".<sup>3</sup> Current theological and ethical thinking of Asian churches, he claimed, had failed to give answers to the questions posed by the intellectuals who were seeking a new culture and a new society.

But the Situation Conferences, unlike the Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service, were also forced by their terms of reference to consider specifically the question of church growth, and thus of the traditional goal of evangelism. The Madras Conference frankly admitted: "In most parts of our society, the churches are not growing in numbers."<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the Tokyo Conference, with the churches in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea noted for their church growth, recommended that EACC should "increase its service as an avenue for exchange of Asian missionaries between countries in Asia": "The EACC can be an instrument for

---

1. Situation Conferences Report, p. 66.

2. Won Yong Kang, "Common Mission — Common Life," in Situation Conferences Report, p. 37.

3. Ibid., p. 33.

4. Situation Conferences Report, p. 54.

lifting the sights of our individual churches to the goal of witness to the ends of the earth."<sup>1</sup> Warnings were clearly sounded by C.H. Hwang and Newbigin about the danger of downgrading church growth and over-emphasising social involvement. Hwang stressed: "God created human life with a double necessity. We must have a centre beyond ourselves and at the same time live in community ... But we have rejected the honour of having our centre in Him and the life in community has become a predicament." Christians, he further explained, "are inescapably caught up" in two revolutions: the new life and new creation of the revolution of Christ and "Asia's revolution" of political, social and religious changes. Christ's revolution is "a life centred in God, open and free for all". He agreed that Christians must be involved in the Asian situations, for "Christ entered into the human situation ... became Lord of the situation. We can only truly be involved in His mission ... by entering deeply into the world of men and nations in which we have been set."<sup>2</sup> But Asian churches must also be concerned with "evangelising for growth":

Whatever partial truth there may be in the sentiment that "God's people will always be a small minority," it is overshadowed by the greater truth that Christ died for all, and "all" surely has numerical significance! ... Evangelism is calling those who are alive in Him and for Him, to live as partakers in His resurrection life.

He pleaded: "'More Christians' and 'better Christians' should not be made into a dichotomy;" and again: "In the population explosion of Asia, why should not God's people also explode?"<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, Newbigin reminded the delegates in Singapore that Christians were "'chosen out of the world'":

---

1. Situation Conferences Report, p. 71.

2. C.H. Hwang, "God's People in Asia Today," in Situation Conferences Report, pp. 5-9.

3. Ibid., pp. 14-16.

You can't escape this other-worldliness ... It is basic. I know that we are very fond just now of talking about "involvement" and that is right. We have to be involved. But our involvement doesn't mean anything at all unless we know first what it means to have been called — called to belong to God. Otherwise we are not just in the world but of it.

He reiterated:

The truth is that we have to speak both of involvement and also of separateness. Involvement means nothing unless there is something to be involved. Involvement implies also separateness. There is a hidden life of the Church as there is a hidden life of the Christian.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, without defining their exact meanings, criticisms, which sometimes came close to outright attack, on "other-worldliness", "escapism", "pietism", "moralism" and "individualism" in both the Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service and the Situation Conferences had given the wrong impression that all these had no place at all in the Christian faith. Scepticism about the traditional practices and goals of evangelism, and apologies for them, must have also given the same impression, and were a slight on evangelism itself. Such criticisms, with their obvious intention of renewing the understanding of Christian laity being the church in mission to all realms of society, aroused reactions from those who still believed in an evangelism characteristic of the first period — preaching to all creatures, asking for repentance and personal decision, making converts, building churches, increasing the membership of the churches. Indeed, instead of renewing and deepening this traditional understanding of evangelism, such hasty criticisms might actually lead to a polarization between social involvement and evangelism, treating the latter as one separate activity having limited relevance to the challenges and needs of a changing East Asia. Consequently, there was a feeling that evangelism had been downgraded and had lost its urgency in the EACC.

Such dissatisfaction could not be ignored and was thrashed out in an

---

1. Lesslie Newbigin, "The Message and the Messengers," in Situation Conferences Report, pp. 85, 91.



open debate at the First Asian Consultation on Inter-Church Aid held in Hong Kong in October 1963. The meeting was called to review inter-church aid programmes and the working relationships between EACC and WCC-DICARWS "in light of the new thinking summed up" in the Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service and the Situation Conferences. More than eighty delegates attended this important meeting, the first of its kind ever held in East Asia.<sup>1</sup>

William D. Hackett, a missionary working in Burma, opened the discussion on "Service by Christians and the Task of Evangelism" by criticising the WCC New Delhi Assembly for advocating: "Do lots of service, ostentatious service, so that everyone can see, but speak only in a whisper." He held that "an improved economy was of no account unless the spiritual life of the people was also changed." He saw no justification for "emphasising service over against preaching the Word ... Service and evangelism were inseparable. Service should always be accompanied by the witness of the Word."<sup>2</sup> One speaker warned that "there was a danger of service becoming an instrument of escape for Christian mission or evangelism." The delegates heard an allegation "that some men were aggressively engaged in Inter-Church Aid yet they had never spoken a word about witness. Millions of dollars were given for inter-church aid and yet nothing might be said about the redemptive love of Jesus Christ. Service and Witness were two vital tasks and were inseparable."<sup>3</sup> Alan Brash argued, "In the EACC, we distinguish, but do not divide service and

---

1. The report of the consultation is Consultation Digest, First Asian Consultation on Inter-Church Aid, sponsored jointly by DICARWS-EACC, at Tao Fong Shan, Hong Kong, October 17-23, 1963: A Summary of Reports and Addresses (Geneva: WCC) (referred to henceforward as ICA Consultation 1963 Report). A report written by Alan Brash on this same consultation was printed in Situation Conferences Report, pp. 105-112.

2. Ibid., pp. 91-92.

3. Ibid., p. 95.

evangelism/," and made it clear that EACC-ICA work would be concerned mainly about joint action whether it was "concerned primarily with service or evangelism".<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Leslie E. Cooke, Director of WCC-DICARWS, pleaded for separate functions for service and evangelism; for, he observed, works of Christian service (which apparently meant to him the running of Christian institutions) had often so over-burdened missionary workers that they had "no time for evangelism". He pleaded for "an identification of Service to save the missionary task of the Church".<sup>2</sup>

The importance of this debate is seen in the fact that the following was included in the "Message of the Consultation" sent to the churches:

We have continued the discussion of the relationship of service and evangelism in our Christian task. This has been raised with special urgency, because of a conviction in some quarters that the emphasis on social service and works of relief and rehabilitation is now so prominent in the churches, that the image presented by the Christian community is rather of a welfare organisation than an evangelistic community. We are conscious that such suggestions, if they are true, are judgments not only on our failure to evangelise, but on the quality of our service. We are agreed in our opposition to any suggestion that the Christian proclamation and the Christian service of love are in any way an antithesis to one another. Our task is a single one, to build the local congregation so that it shall be both an evangelising community and deeply involved in the life of service. Christian service should be demonstration of the Gospel, and while it can be so perverted that it becomes an escape from the obligation to evangelise, it is equally true that a pre-occupation with so-called evangelism can be an escape from the obligation to serve. In a few places in Asia, for example in Nepal, service is of necessity the main form of Christian witness. We are certainly agreed that the Christian service with which we are engaged in Inter-Church Aid is an identifiable part of our witness to the wholeness of the Gospel as it is Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

The integral relationship between evangelism and service, with the latter understood to include concrete Christian social concern, was re-affirmed in Hong Kong. But it was also clear that the statement quoted

- 
1. Alan Brash, "Inter-Church Aid through EACC," in ICA Consultation 1963 Report, p. 63.
  2. ICA Consultation 1963 Report, p. 95.
  3. Ibid., p. 101.

above was a defensive one — defending the position of service and quoting the case of Nepal as an argument. Evangelism and service seemed to remain somehow unrelated to each other. Thus, with the appeal for concrete social involvement, there appeared at the same time a problem about the relationship between evangelism and social concern. If this problem were left unresolved, it might eventually create differences or even divisions among Asian Christians. But this reaffirmation in Hong Kong must have helped to make mission one of the main concerns in the Third Assembly of the EACC held at Bangkok in 1964.

There were other factors, to be sure, which had helped to highlight this concern. Firstly, as described earlier, there was the impact of Fleming's book, Structures for a Missionary Congregation, and the dominant emphasis on "Christian Presence" in the statement, "The Christian Community Within the Human Community." Secondly, the deep and gathering concern about the adverse effects of the growth of world confessional developments upon the selfhood, unity and mission of the Asian churches was highlighted by the plea from the Situation Conferences for Joint Action for Mission. Thirdly, Asian Christian leaders certainly felt the impact of the idea of "Witness in Six Continents" coming out from the meeting of the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism at Mexico City in December 1963. The Mexico meeting affirmed that the missionary movement "now involves Christians in all six continents and in all lands. It must be the common witness of the whole Church, bringing the whole Gospel to the whole world."<sup>1</sup> Newbigin believed that Asian theologians' belief in the working of God in secular events had contributed in part to the production of this new thinking.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the home base was

- 
1. Ronald K. Orchard, Witness in Six Continents: Records of the Meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches held at Mexico City, December 8th-19th, 1963 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), p. 175.
  2. Lesslie Newbigin, "Mission to Six Continents," in Harold E. Fey (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance, p. 187.

regarded as being everywhere, and the mission field was everywhere. All were said to be engaged in mission, and all Christian participation and activities would thus bear evangelistic significance. All these ideas, concerns and events certainly helped make mission one of the main concerns in the 1964 Assembly.

There was a Pre-Assembly Consultation on Missionaries to and within Asia as a follow-up to what had already been generally discussed at Bangalore about the various matters of sending and receiving missionaries, the responsibility of the sending and receiving churches, and the remuneration and preparation of missionaries. In line with the thinking of the Mexico meeting and the Situation Conferences, the Consultation affirmed: "That the whole Church is called in mission to the whole world means that, when we are talking about the missionary enterprise, we are talking about the churches everywhere engaging together in mission. All must receive: all must send."<sup>1</sup> The Assembly itself approved the proposal from the Hong Kong ICA Consultation for the establishment of an Asian Missionaries Support Fund to be used in assisting the sending of missionaries from Asian churches.<sup>2</sup> This new Fund was certainly a response to the appeal from the Situation Conferences held in Tokyo and Hong Kong for an expansion of EACC's activities of liaison, assistance and encouragement in the evangelistic enterprise of its member-churches.<sup>3</sup>

But at Bangkok in 1964, Asian Christian leaders had also observed correctly that the time had come for the EACC to involve all its member-churches in a careful study of the whole meaning and implications of the mission of the Church in East Asia. The call for a renewal of the laity to be the church in mission in all realms of Asian life was needed to

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 60.

2. Ibid., p. 69.

3. Situation Conferences Report, pp. 71, 106; ICA Consultation 1963 Report, p. 116.

free Asian Christians from their sociological and religious captivity. But this renewal would need to be accompanied by a deeper understanding of evangelism and the role that it could play in the process of nation-building. The debate in the Hong Kong ICA Consultation had shown that to avoid a polarisation between evangelism and social concern, what had become necessary was a renewed understanding of mission which could truly integrate and do justice to both evangelism and social concern. But this much-needed renewed understanding was closely related to the struggles against the adverse effects of confessionalism and the growth of world confessional organisations upon the selfhood of the Asian churches. For in these struggles, Asian Christian leaders had come to realise that what they had first to deal with was not so much the question of the relationship between evangelism and social concern, but rather, the primary and crucial question of how best the Asian churches who were growing into their selfhood could confess their faith in the particular situation of East Asia. It was the question of "Confessing the Faith in Asia Today" which needed first to be answered. The 1964 Assembly therefore rightly approved the recommendation from the Committee on Life, Message and Unity for the holding of a conference on faith and order for the articulation of this crucial question. In making this proposal, the Committee had explained:

It is vital that the Churches in Asia today, as they come to responsible selfhood, should make their confession of the faith once for all delivered to the saints in terms meaningful and relevant to their own life, and to the life of the world in which they are set to communicate the Gospel and witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

It can be observed that the proposed conference was to have two main and inter-related objectives. The first was to strengthen the EACC's current struggle against confessionalism and its expressions which were hindering the growth of the selfhood of the Asian churches, their confessing

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Report, pp. 52-53.



life and their efforts towards total mission and unity; as will be described later, this struggle was one of the main concerns of the 1964 Assembly. The second was to usher in a theological renewal among the Asian churches so that their understanding of mission and evangelism could be constantly renewed and deepened and that they might become "confessing churches" in their lands.

The 1964 Assembly was indeed very much concerned that so little actual advance had been made by many Asian churches in the direction of interdependence of churches and Joint Action for Mission. Asian churches were urged to seek to support the WCC Project List so that there might be "truly mutual giving and receiving",<sup>1</sup> for so far they were more at the receiving end than at the giving. The Assembly heard the report that while there was a great deal of bi-lateral inter-church aid between Asian churches and churches and mission agencies outside Asia, there had been "very little" such activity between Asian churches themselves.<sup>2</sup> The Assembly appealed to its member-churches to consider seriously the findings of the Situation Conferences and whether Joint Action for Mission was not the next step in missionary obedience to which they were called. The Assembly had rightly observed that while this appeal must be addressed firstly to the member-churches, "convinced co-operation" would be needed from mission agencies and world confessional organisations before Joint Action could be really put into effect.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the EACC had been engaged in this struggle for "convinced co-operation" since its establishment at Kuala Lumpur in 1959.

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Report, p. 25.

2. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 69.

3. Bangkok 1964 Report, p. 28.



3. The Renewal of the Asian Churches as "Confessing Churches"

The fundamental theological position from which the EACC set out to deal concretely with the problems posed by the development of confessionalism and world confessional organisations in the efforts of the Asian churches towards joint action for mission and growth into selfhood was carefully formulated by its chief spokesman and theological exponent, D.T. Niles, in his lecture given at the Kuala Lumpur Assembly in 1959 and published in his book, Upon the Earth, in 1962, and in the statement issued by the Enlarged Continuation Committee at Bangalore in 1961. In the process, some other EACC leaders, such as C.H. Hwang and J.R. Fleming, had also contributed to this formulation.

Niles held that worship of the triune God was the basis of a church's selfhood. But this selfhood was also defined by its location — the nation — in which most Asian churches had now found themselves. He believed that in the Bible "it is the nations that will be gathered unto Zion ... In the New Covenant the people of God are to be found in every nation and for them. That is how the Church's mission is established and presented." Its mission "is primarily and in the first instance ... to ITS world. The task of mission is to possess the promised land, to extend the boundaries of the church to the boundaries of its location."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the Gospel must be

... first preached as a witness among the nations before the end comes (Matt. 24:14) ... To speak of the end of time as part of the perspective of mission is to be committed to a strategy of mission that accepts the visible unity of churches as one of its goals and the penetration of every nation in its national and cultural life by the Gospel as its main endeavour.<sup>2</sup>

The church, Niles held, cannot be many selves: "A first consequence of

---

1. Niles, "A Church and its Selfhood," in A Decisive Hour ... (J.R. Mott Lectures, 1959), pp. 74-77.

2. Ibid., pp. 95-96.

the attainment of selfhood in the churches of Asia is the church union movement," and the "true context" for this movement "is not denominations but nations, not the Church as such but the Church for the world"<sup>1</sup> (*italics mine*).

Niles recognised the "shift and change" in history, the "rise and fall" of peoples and nations, and conceded: "For none of these processes or results should any theological validity be claimed." "But," he held,

... in every "here and now" God shows His concern for the groupings in which men live and to which they belong, and He treats these groupings as units of human life to be challenged by His word ... For God's concern is not only with men as persons but also with them as nations, with those secular qualities of man's life which go to make up the life of the world. "God loved the world" and not just people, the Gospel is for the redemption of the world and not just for the salvation of souls .... The biblical concern for the nations is thus seen, in the first instance, as a concern to cross with the Gospel every secular frontier between man and man — whether it be the frontier of race or class, caste or culture, tribe or language, nation or country. And, in the second instance, it is seen as the concern to create within each secular frontier such a testimony to the Gospel as will claim the life within that frontier to a service of it.<sup>2</sup>

Niles noted the apprehension felt by the churches in the West of any attempt "to identify 'the nations' in the Bible with the modern nation-states". "For," he said, "it is so easy to slip from a concern to build a church for the nation into a desire to build a church of the nation"<sup>3</sup> (*italics mine*). Therefore, to him, the church's selfhood is not only "national" or local but also universal. It must have relationships with other churches, or other selves, in other localities. These relationships, he stated unequivocally, are "not an option that a church can exercise if and when it will: it is an obligation which every church must accept and by God's grace discharge;" and he stressed: "To be foreign — that is part of the nature of every church, and by no other function does a church fully realize or exhibit this foreignness as by being missionary

---

1. Niles, "A Church and its Selfhood," in A Decisive Hour ..., p. 77.

2. Niles, Upon the Earth, pp. 255-256.

3. Ibid., p. 256.

beyond its borders."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the nature of God's mission to the world can never allow a church to exist in isolation, for His "continuing mission", so Niles claimed, is "weaving together the many strands of human history into one movement". This is His "central missionary movement which binds human history together". All churches, therefore, must "share a common life, all in each place and all throughout the world, so that the world may recognize the one mission." For they are called to be "active participants in the central missionary movement".<sup>2</sup>

If this is the meaning of being "national", and if "the selfhood grows in relationship with other selves", that relationship in the common task of mission to the world will be expressed in partnership of the churches with one another. Indeed, the principle of partnership in mission had been accepted by Christians for many years. But, Niles stressed, "partnership is to mean not only simply a relation of mutual helpfulness between two partners, but an actual growth into interdependence," and "true interdependence must rule out both the assertion of, and the withdrawal into, independence." Niles never spoke of the independence of the church. What he believed in was an interdependence of "joint consultation", "joint decision" and "adult relationship".<sup>3</sup> The integrity of the selfhood of each church must be honoured, particularly in the cases of the Asian churches which had just started their growth into selfhood; and he cited the EACC as "one more expression of this growth of the churches in Asia into selfhood".<sup>4</sup>

It is therefore clear that Niles's understanding of the selfhood of the church was both local or "national" and universal. He would not allow narrow nationalism or isolationism to creep into the struggles for

---

1. Niles, "A Church and its Selfhood," in A Decisive Hour ..., pp. 81, 94.

2. Niles, "The Ecumenical Task," in Situation Conferences Report, pp. 20-21.

3. Niles, "A Church and its Selfhood," p. 87.

4. Ibid., p. 96.

selfhood. The church is "national" only in the sense that its given mission is in and to, and starts from, the locality. In the case of the Asian churches, this "location" would be the new Asian nations, and that a nation should attain a meaningful selfhood must also be "part of the requirement for a church's full discharge of its mission in and to that nation".<sup>1</sup>

Hwang, similarly, recognised well "the ambiguity of nationalism". The happiness of the Asian people would "depend upon how the new nations would avoid the suicide of ultra-nationalistic self-assertion as well as on how they would free themselves from slavish colonial submission".<sup>2</sup> Hwang distinguished "confession" and "a confessing church" from "confessionalism", and it was the resurgence of the last that he felt "unfortunate for the younger churches in Asia". For "confessionalism" to him meant the absolutizing of certain historic confessions which were then used to judge the position of other Christians and subsequently to separate them from each other. Hwang did not deny the necessity of formulating confessions; indeed, he agreed, "the confessional inheritance of the churches may be shared in all its riches as part of their common heritage" (italics mine). But they must not "become a barrier" between themselves and other Christians.<sup>3</sup> He argued that a confession should consist of four vital elements in the following order of priority: (i) the acknowledgement of the Lordship of God, (ii) a confession of sins, (iii) confessing Him before men and among nations, (iv) the maintenance of right doctrine. He believed that confessionalism tended to absolutize the last element at the expense of the other three, so that even a good confession could become confessionalism; would not such tendencies towards absolutization in effect be "limiting and therefore trespassing on the Lordship

---

1. Niles, "A Church and its Selfhood," in A Decisive Hour ..., p. 75.

2. Hwang, "God's People in Asia Today," in Situation Conferences Report,

3. Ibid., pp. 13-14. p. 11.

of God ... judging each other instead of confessing that we have sinned before the Lordship of Christ"?<sup>1</sup> In the missionary situation of the younger churches, he argued on another occasion, "confessing is almost the same thing as witnessing", and therefore "their confession ... is first of all related to the world". He could not accept the accusation that unity in East Asia was being achieved at the expense of truth: "Mission and unity belong to the esse of the Church and therefore to the truth of the Church" — "Is there any truth which can dispense with the mission and the unity of the Church? Are not mission and unity inherent and born out of the very heart of the Gospel?" — "There is Truth and truth ... Truth can give us freedom and responsibility to re-express these truths as they come out through the ages."<sup>2</sup> And he reiterated: "So long as our confession is directed against each other rather than as a witness to the world, it remains an 'ism'."<sup>3</sup>

Niles could certainly agree with Hwang that Asian Christians in their pursuit of unity must acknowledge the importance of the question of truth. He himself explained:

It would be a tragedy if the theological insights which lie behind and beneath the various confessions were brushed aside as of no account. Un-denominationalism is a blind man's way out of the problem. What is needed is a swifter attempt to hold together in one universe of discourse the various confessional positions and a greater resolve to express at the local level the maximum amount of churchly unity. Ways must be explored of building local congregational unity without prejudging or compromising theological issues.<sup>4</sup>

- 
1. Hwang, "God's People in Asia Today," in Situation Conferences Report, p. 13.
  2. C.H. Hwang, "The Question of Freedom and Responsibility for Confession and Unity in the Indigenous Church," Proceedings of a Consultation on World Confessionalism held at Geneva, October 2-5, 1963, pp. 2, 4 (referred to henceforward as Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings). Records of proceedings and minutes of similar meetings on world confessionalism and world confessional organisations may be made available on request from the Lutheran World Federation office at Geneva.
  3. Hwang, "God's People in Asia Today," p. 13.
  4. Niles, Upon the Earth, p. 211.



Similarly Fleming, while acknowledging the necessity for Asian churches to formulate their own confessions, said:

There is no question about this standing IN CHRIST. The great Tradition ... has been communicated in Asia. The question we have to face today in Asia is how we respond in our own obedience to the living God.

And he believed:

Christian theology in Asia will come alive, with its own emphases and insights — not the docile dogmatic utterances of daughter churches echoing the historic confessions of mother churches in the West — but the authentic accents of a living church obedient to the Word of God in its own situation.

"Let us," he agreed, "have the insights of the reformers fully appreciated in the Asian churches, but the theological obedience of the 'Younger Churches' is THEIR obedience, in THEIR situation."<sup>1</sup>

The Bangalore statement contains views very similar to those expressed by Niles, Hwang and Fleming. In it, the EACC Enlarged Continuation Committee never suggested abandonment or elimination of confessions, but recognised that in fact "the historic confessions of the faith are part of the heritage of the Asian churches. These confessions, the truths which they express and the divisions among Christians which they represent, comprise issues of major importance for Asian Christians." It recognised also that one of the interests of a confessional fellowship is "of discovering the contribution which a confession can bring to the total Christian witness in the world" (*italics mine*). But the Asian churches, "at the same time, must find expressions for their faith within their own situation." And "their task ... demands, among other things, a serious re-appraisal of the historic confessions. ... One of the factors demanding such a re-appraisal is the development of world confessional bodies."<sup>2</sup> Here the EACC clearly held that development of world confessional organisations was a sign of the development of world confessionalism or of a desire in some quarters to promote this. In spite of their

---

1. Situation Conferences Report, pp. 3-4.

2. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, pp. 37-39.



declared interest and participation in the ecumenical movement, both Niles and Hwang had argued that the largely bi-lateral pattern of the work of these world organisations, such as giving of funds, personnel assistance and other services, would only intensify confessional consciousness at the cost of joint action for mission and attainment of selfhood among the younger churches. "Confessionalism, organised in world organisations, is for us in the younger churches not merely an obstacle but a temptation."<sup>1</sup> It might result "in the perpetuation and reinforcement of patterns of paternalism and continued exercise of control."<sup>2</sup> The Committee recognised the possibility that confessional ties might be "vitally useful to enable a church to serve without allowing the demands of a nation to dominate its life." But this "promise and opportunity" could not remove the Committee's "fear and anxiety": the younger churches had "a confessional origin" but "they do not have a confessional history of their own. Their history is one with the history of their fellow churches in the lands in which they are situated."<sup>3</sup> In all this, the EACC was actually demanding that the truth of confessionalism and the existence of its world organisations should be critically examined in the light of the Asian ecumenical movement and the efforts of the Asian churches working towards joint action for mission and selfhood.

Bangalore well recognised the risk in the task of formulating confessions, particularly in the Asian situation, with its various mounting pressures upon the Asian churches. There was "the pressure of other religions. The church must face the temptation to syncretism on the one hand, and the need for co-operation with men of other faiths on the other hand in the performance of secular tasks." There was also

---

1. Niles, Upon the Earth, p. 213; see also Hwang, "The Question of Freedom ...", in Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings, p. 5.

2. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 39.

3. Ibid.

"the pressure of nationalism raising on the one hand the issue of a Church being a Church for the nation; while on the other hand the danger must be avoided of allowing the needs and desires of the nation becoming the criteria for determining the life of the Church." It therefore affirmed: "The determining pressure is the pressure of the Gospel"<sup>1</sup> (italics mine).

It is evident that the views held by the EACC leaders at the time both before and after Bangalore, and the core content of the Bangalore statement which represented the official position of the EACC, were neither nationalistic nor isolationistic. They were local, universal, balanced and Christocentric. The affirmation that it would not allow the nation to provide the criteria for determining the life of the church shows that the Bangalore statement was a cautious, not to say conservative, one. It regarded the Asian situations as the context of mission and unity but not as their basis; and the Asian churches as in and for the nation, but not of the nation. The Bangalore statement had indeed raised some sharp but legitimate questions for the world confessional organisations, and it was obvious that many practical issues would need to be further discussed. The EACC therefore recommended that following the Situation Conferences a major consultation for this purpose should be held and leaders of various mission agencies and confessional organisations be invited to attend.<sup>2</sup>

(a) The debate on world confessionalism and its expressions

The Bangalore statement was issued just prior to the WCC New Delhi Assembly. "The timing of the EACC was perfect, for the Assembly" could

---

1. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 40.

2. Ibid., p. 41. For a general description of various world confessional organisations, see Harold E. Fey (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance, pp. 134-142.

hardly afford to ignore the challenge."<sup>1</sup> The Assembly noted that opinion was divided over the effects of the existence and work of world confessional organisations upon their member-churches' efforts working towards local unity. But if these organisations agreed with the Assembly's emphasis on the unity of "all in each place", they must consider the union of their member-churches with others not as a loss "but as a gain for the whole church". The Assembly held that these organisations would be rendering a service to such uniting churches if they would "assist them in the responsible study of all issues which are involved in a proposed union".<sup>2</sup>

The Bangalore statement and the questioning at New Delhi aroused strong reactions from some leaders of world confessional organisations. The statement was regarded as EACC's "protest" and "indignation" against these organisations. Indeed, even as late as 1969, it was still remembered as "an all-out attack" and "an emotionally charged indictment".<sup>3</sup> At the 1962 meeting of representatives of World Confessional Groups at Geneva, L.W. Mudge of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches attempted to justify the existence of confessional churches and organisations by arguing that "confessional documents have never been considered constitutive of the Church but only functional within it. [They have been used as] standards of doctrine and discipline. They were never used as bases for judging the churchliness of other Christian bodies, and they are not so used today." "A confessional church ... is a catholic church having a particular discipline ... a church which confesses its faith to the world in particular forms of order and doctrine." To him, therefore,

---

1. Harold E. Fey, "Confessional Families and the Ecumenical Movement," in H.E. Fey (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance, p. 124.

2. Visser't Hooft (ed.), The New Delhi Report, pp. 132-133.

3. James A. Scherer, Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, A Study in Confession and Ecumenicity (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), pp. 113, 116.

there could be "all forms of confession", and their usage was not inevitably sectarian or divisive. However, Mudge's argument was followed by his later contradictory statement that unity in each place could not be attained "until our theological problems ... are really worked through", which meant in effect that confessional documents did keep the churches apart. But Mudge agreed that the real issue was that of "the actual effect of confessional alignments and organisations on ecumenical relations". He denied that any world confessional organisation would place obstacles in the way of church union sought by its member-churches, though this might be done by "the powerful denominations in the West".<sup>1</sup> In other words, it was suggested that the EACC was actually missing the real targets. Kurt Schmidst-Clausen, Executive Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, stressed "unity in truth" in his address. Lutherans were apprehensive about church unions which appealed primarily to national, regional, cultural or linguistic factors. "Unsolved doctrinal differences could not," he said, "be overcome by organisational means. True ecumenism was always concerned with worldwide unity."<sup>2</sup> However, it was J. Nordenhaug of the Baptist World Alliance who appeared to be most critical of the EACC. He wondered what had motivated EACC's criticism and whether the younger churches were looking at the ecumenical movement as an organisation or as the expression of Christian solidarity:

Did these Churches honestly believe that confessional differences were merely "western", and not based on theological conviction? How far was their impatience a concomitant of the new nationalism? How far was the WCC condoning the establishment of "national" Churches in Asia and Africa, while condemning it in Europe?<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. Lewis S. Mudge, "The World Confessional Bodies and the Ecumenical Movement," in Minutes of Meeting of World Confessional Groups, 3rd and 4th April, 1962, pp. 10-13 (referred to henceforward as Confessionalism 1962 Minutes).
  2. Scherer, Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, p. 119.
  3. Confessionalism 1962 Minutes, p. 5.

Norman Goodall, representing the WCC, regarded the world confessional organisations as an expression of world confessionalism, but he strongly criticised certain papers and individuals present at the Bangalore meeting for wrongfully accusing these organisations of playing ecclesiastical power politics. However, he agreed that if these organisations did represent the differences between Christians, and the causes of their separation, then the issue would have "life-and-death importance". World confessionalism had always contended that it was within the ecumenical movement and its organisations were with the WCC in its articulation of the meaning of the ecumenical movement. He asked, therefore, whether these two movements would subject themselves together "to the same process of re-examination and renewal (rebirth by death) ... fulfilling their purpose only within a movement ... moving towards a larger and deeper unity".<sup>1</sup> In other words, Goodall was raising the question of whether these organisations had only transitional and temporary existence. However, this question was not answered in the midst of the rather emotional reactions of the 1962 meeting. The meeting had apparently failed to note adequately the fundamental theological positions and practical concerns raised in the Bangalore statement. The speakers gave only a defence of the "theological validity and ecumenical usefulness of their organisations. They were not, however, speaking to the expressed desires of the Asian churches."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, their emotional reactions only led to a misunderstanding of the term "national" church. These fears of the 1940s and 1950s of a narrow nationalism, which were clearly evident in the process of events leading up to the formation of the EACC, were still present in the 1960s. However, the Bangalore statement had succeeded in pressing the confessional organisations to a serious

---

1. Norman Goodall, "Some notes on World Confessionalism and the Ecumenical Movement," in Confessionalism 1962 Minutes, pp. 29, 31-32.

2. Scherer, Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, p. 120.



re-examination of their relationships with and their influence upon the confessing life and growth into selfhood of the younger churches. They agreed that an early consultation with the representatives of the regional councils was necessary and this should be held before the one to be convened by the EACC in 1964.<sup>1</sup>

The EACC delegation, which comprised Niles, Hwang, A.L. Fransz of the Indonesian NCC and Michael Hollis of the Church of South India, came to the 1963 meeting armed not only with the Bangalore statement but also with the strong emphasis on Joint Action for Mission of the Situation Conferences. Hwang reiterated that the EACC was only against confession-alism and the danger of its perpetuation and expansion among the Asian churches, intentionally or unintentionally, by the existence and work of the world organisations. He wanted more multilateral relationships between and among confessional organisations and all churches.<sup>2</sup> Niles refused to accept the distinctions made between world organisations and their member-churches. He argued, the strength of both derived from each other. The "blood brother" argument of Arne Sovik, the representative of the LWF, that "the first move of a church from isolation is towards community with others in the same confessional tradition", was answered by Niles with the declaration that there was no "confessional blood" except the blood of Christ. Niles believed that Asian churches should naturally "turn for help first of all to fellow-Christians in their country, whatever their denomination".<sup>3</sup> Sovik, like Schmidst-Clausen and Mudge, based his argument strongly on unity in doctrines and the nature of the international, universal fellowship of the Church.

---

1. Supra, p. 187.

2. Hwang, "The Question of Freedom ...", in Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings, pp. 2, 5, 7.

3. Arne Sovik, "Freedom and Responsibility for Confession and Unity in the Indigenous Church," in Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings, pp. 6,8,19.



He opposed the idea that Christian responsibility to the nation was exercised by the formation of a national church. Experience of some state-controlled German churches during the Nazi regime, he said, had shown that "churches that draw their life from cultural and political loyalties" would have their prophetic witness smothered. "Theologically the idea of one nation — one church is questionable and its consequences dangerous."<sup>1</sup> It was unfortunate that here again there was a misunderstanding of the term "national" church. Sovik failed to deal with the difference between his idea of being a church of the nation and that of the church in and for the nation of the EACC and its leadership. He also failed to note that the EACC was not indifferent to unity in truth.

Sovik admitted that membership in a world-wide confessional organisation might retard the progress of local unity. He also frankly declared that the LWF could not accept multilateral procedures for the execution of all its concerns, particularly in financial matters. "Confessional money determines policy" — "Lutheran church people, like most others, give most generously to their own causes." But the LWF, he said, had not the power to stop its members from taking bi-lateral action with their fellow churches in other localities.<sup>2</sup> As James Scherer rightly observed, "In general, the LWF refused to plead guilty to the EACC's Bangalore indictment."<sup>3</sup>

But there were signs of moving towards agreement with some of the issues raised by the EACC. For example, Sovik said:

The confession of a younger church ... is formed from a combination of factors: the common tradition that binds all Christians together, the more closely defined and elaborated tradition (sometimes expressed on paper in what is called a "confession",

---

1. Arne Sovik, "Freedom and Responsibility ...", in Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings, pp. 13-14.

2. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

3. Scherer, Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, pp. 120-121.

sometimes not) of a particular family of churches, and finally, that common understanding of the Gospel that springs from a given cultural background.<sup>1</sup>

He believed that a church without the burden of Western tradition might "also find a new and better understanding of the biblical message ... Such true insights will add to the treasure of the whole Church."<sup>2</sup> On church reunion, he said all churches were responsible to "the reality of the Church catholic". But "the greatest responsibility" rested with the church in the locality which alone could make the decision to cut its confessional ties and be part of the united church in the locality. When a local church made such a decision "in obedience to conscience, in prayerful study of the Scriptures, and in listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit as guides in that particular situation", it would be the part of sister churches elsewhere, he said, "to accept the decision, to consider whether they have a lesson to learn, and to maintain the bonds of fellowship in as far as conscience will allow."<sup>3</sup>

The 1963 meeting, which was attended by more than forty representatives from different confessional and denominational organisations, churches and regional councils, witnessed a frank exchange of views, although it did not go into many specific issues.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, it was felt at the end of the meeting that further study on specific theological and practical issues was necessary if real points of conflict and hindrances could be located and remedies found. The meeting therefore resolved that two meetings of the officers of the confessional organisations

---

1. Arne Sovik, "Freedom and Responsibility ...", in Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings, p. 14.

2. Ibid., p. 15.

3. Ibid., pp. 14-15.

4. World confessional organisations and families represented at the 1963 meeting and other subsequent meetings were: the Anglican Communion, the International Congregational Council, the Friends World Committee, the World Convention of the Churches of Christ, the Lutheran World Federation, World Presbyterian Alliance, the World Methodist Council, the Salvation Army, the Baptist World Alliance, Old Catholic Churches.

should be held yearly and a consultation of a similar kind at two-yearly intervals.<sup>1</sup>

The two meetings of 1962 and 1963 had certainly helped the EACC to see that it had to be specific in this struggle against confessionalism. It had come to see that not all confessional organisations had the same functions and that they were not influencing their members all in the same way. There was therefore the problem of "confessional families", apart from that of individual organisations. In addition to these two, it had to deal with individual mission agencies, denominational churches in the West, and indeed above all else with the Asian churches themselves, which needed much courage, guidance and faith on their way to renewal and selfhood. As described earlier, the Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service and the Situation Conferences were held partly with this purpose in mind.

Thus, both the consultation held just prior to the 1964 Assembly and the Assembly itself drew attention to the "Confessional Families and the Churches in Asia" in relation to four particular areas: the ecumenical movement, church union, Joint Action for Mission, and membership in confessional organisations.<sup>2</sup> It then had "a particular word" to share with the "Big Three" (the World Methodist Council, the Anglican Communion, and the Lutheran World Federation): the Assembly asked for the "fullest consultation" and a "multilateral pattern" of work from the "Big Three", so that their programmes "should not isolate" the Asian churches from helping one another but provide "full encouragement and help" to the Asian churches in seeking reunion among themselves.<sup>3</sup> The Asian churches

---

1. Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings, pp. 43-47.

2. Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 71-80. This report was included as Appendix in Confessional Families and the Churches in Asia: Report from a Consultation convened by the East Asia Christian Conference and held at Kandy, Ceylon, Dec. 6-8, 1965 (Bangkok: EACC), pp. 24-32 (referred to henceforward as Kandy 1965 Report).

3. Bangkok 1964 Report, pp. 21-23.

themselves were told that they were "moving towards autonomy" —

But this does not mean simply that a church becomes organisationally independent of its parent church. Such organisational independence by itself can also spell spiritual weakness. Rather, it is a question of a church finding its own selfhood, of being able under God to make its own response to its Lord in the specific situation in which, along with other churches in the same situation, it has been called to mission.<sup>1</sup>

The Assembly then warned against the temptation "to maintain theological positions simply in order to be in good standing with their parent churches of the west". On church union, "a church must make up its own mind and accept the consequence of its own obedience". Asian churches should not ask their parent churches to decide for them; although, "since the parent churches are inevitably involved, they too must decide how best to help in this process of decision-making without violating their own integrity or that of the younger churches."<sup>2</sup>

Scherer claimed that at Bangkok "tempers had cooled, and a more balanced view" appeared.<sup>3</sup> However, the fundamental theological position and the practical concerns of the EACC in this struggle against confession-alism and its expressions had remained very much the same. It had always been a balanced view. What was said at Bangkok, and later in another consultation held at Kandy in 1965, were only enlargements of the fundamental position, and indeed, added whatever had been conceded by the confessional organisations themselves. Thus, Bangkok 1964 reaffirmed its belief in "the ultimate disappearance of the present confessional structures" in the on-going efforts of all Christians to seek a fuller manifestation of the unity of the Church. "It may be that the best thing for United Churches to do is not to join any world confessional organisation." For it was their participation not in the confessional

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Report, p. 18.

2. Ibid., p. 19.

3. Scherer, Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, p. 123.

organisations but in the WCC and "now through the East Asia Christian Conference" that Asian churches were discovering their selfhood as churches. It held that in such ecumenical organisations there would be "equal partnership" and no risk of the "constant danger of reproducing within the working of these denominational world bodies many of the features of patronage which the missionary movement has outgrown".<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok 1964 also reaffirmed its belief in the church being in and for the nation. It did not, as alleged by Scherer, move from a position of taking the Asian environment as the basis of unity to that of the context of mission.<sup>2</sup> As described earlier, the Asian situations had always been taken as the context of mission and unity but not as the basis. The Assembly reaffirmed:

A Church is not a national or geographical entity. Nation and country give the context within which the Church must fulfil its mission and therefore, lives its life; but every local Church must maintain its organic place in the Church Universal.<sup>3</sup>

The Christocentric position of Christian confession was also re-subscribed at Bangkok. There was a clear recognition of the necessity of formulating confessions. But

... not that it is enough for a Church to draw up its confession once for all; its confession must be constantly related to the "Now" at which it stands. A confession must be determined by the call to unity and the call to mission. Only so can it be ensured that unity is not sought at the expense of truth; for the truth is Jesus Christ Himself and He is both the ground of the Church's unity and purport of its mission.<sup>4</sup>

The statements issued at Bangkok were specific and detailed. The world confessional organisations and mission agencies had to consider their appropriate response to the EACC's challenge.

The 1965 Enlarged Meeting of the Representatives of World Confessional

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 72-74, 79.

2. Scherer, Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, p. 125.

3. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 75.

4. Ibid., pp. 75-76.



Bodies at Geneva issued an official statement as their response.<sup>1</sup> It conceded that "the Church lives 'between the times'", between the coming end of the confessional era and the fully ecumenical age. It admitted: "The separate churches tend to speak at times as though their specific confessional traditions were the only criteria of truth," and "Christians are discovering that the historic confessions and structures often tend to become obstacles to a relevant witness and service to the world." The churches found themselves "compelled to think of their confessions and structures in a new perspective and therefore open to development and reconciliation". The statement urged the older churches to engage in a critical self-examination of their actual confessional position.<sup>2</sup>

But the 1965 statement also saw no immediate solutions to the many problems created by the unilateral decisions of the member-churches of the confessional organisations. There was therefore "a noticeable discrepancy between the affirmations and resolutions made in these bodies [world confessional bodies] and the decisions and actions of the churches represented in them." And, as already clearly admitted by Sovik in the 1963 meeting, the 1965 statement also saw the great problem of confessional money determining confessional policy.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the 1965 statement identified with the EACC in its criticism of the absolutization of confessions and its view of world confessional organisations as transitional and on the way to a fuller manifestation of the unity of the Church. But the minutes of this meeting also show that behind this official statement, certain individual representatives and organisations had remained critical of the EACC, and still misunderstood

---

1. Minutes of Enlarged Meeting of the World Council Confessional Bodies, held at Geneva, 12-13 October, 1965, Appendix II (referred to henceforward as Confessionalism 1965 Minutes).

2. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

3. Ibid., pp. 4-5; cf. supra, p. 214.



its theological position. For example, W. von Krause of the Evangelical Lutheran Church could still speak of some people advocating that "confessions must be eliminated". Asian and African Christians were "influenced by nationalism" in their demand for "tribal and national churches today", and they regarded the "great world-wide confessional Federations as being opposed to their own little tribal, national or regional unity". He said this "tribalisation" was "a real, deadly menace for the Church of our times in Asia and Africa" — "unity can be achieved only through being united in right preaching and the right administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the Bible" — "Regionalism (on a world scale) is the worst form of ecumenical sin, because it endangers or destroys the world-wide unity which already exists."<sup>1</sup> This enlarged meeting ought to have been attended by representatives from regional councils as recommended at the 1963 meeting. But as none was invited, misunderstandings such as this unfortunately escaped clarification.

On the other hand, the consultation convened by the EACC at Kandy two months later in December 1965 was well attended by representatives of confessional organisations and mission agencies. Scherer rightly observed that "the Kandy meeting said little that was new" on such issues as inter-church aid, Joint Action for Mission, autonomy, and church union.<sup>2</sup> However, one important point which escaped his observation was the strong appeal to the Asian churches to attain financial self-support. Indeed, in the light of Sovik's frank remark in 1963 and the 1965 official statement that confessional money determined confessional policy, it was clear that one of the ways to overcome confessionalism was for the Asian churches to attain financial self-support. Kandy therefore urged, "We note among

---

1. "Engagement in the Mission and Unity of the Church," a paper presented by W. von Krause at the 1965 meeting, pp. 6, 9-10, 12.

2. Scherer, Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, p. 127.

ourselves, as Asian churches, a regrettable tendency to look elsewhere for financial security. This needs to be watched by Asian Churches in relation to 'the scandal of dependency' and supporting Churches and organisations as possible threats to a church's responsible selfhood."

It believed, "Autonomy will involve the task of rethinking the structures of the Church as an institution and organisation, and the congruence of these structures with the economic realities of the countries where these Churches are."<sup>1</sup> However, this was only one of the important observations made at Kandy, for it was from this meeting at Kandy in 1965 that the debate on confessionalism began to produce at the same time some positive insights towards a deeper understanding of the theological and missionary tasks in the Asian churches.

(b) Towards deeper understanding of the Asian theological and missionary tasks — Kandy 1965, Hong Kong 1966

The real importance of the Kandy Consultation is found in its understanding of "the Confessing Church in Asia and its Theological Task", which prepared the groundwork for the Consultation on Faith and Order with its central theme on "Confessing the Faith in Asia Today", to be held a year later in Hong Kong. Both consultations, particularly the one held in Hong Kong, had produced some important insights which could renew and deepen the Asian churches' understanding of the function of theology and the mission of the Church in the coming years.

In its attempt to understand the meaning of being a confessing church in the contemporary Asian situation, the Kandy Consultation affirmed, firstly:

The faith which the Asian Churches have to confess in the midst of their nations is that which the Church has always held and which is found in the Scriptures of the Old and New

---

1. Kandy 1965 Report, pp. 23, 17.

Testaments. This faith, continuously confirmed in the spiritual experience of the Church of Christ, is witnessed to and safeguarded by the creeds of the early Church.<sup>1</sup>

With the authority of the Scriptures and continuity of Christian experience thus affirmed, the Consultation then stated:

For Asian Churches to be confessing Churches in the contemporary world of Asia means that they must extend their worship of God from the sanctuary to the secular world; their creeds and confessions from the liturgy to the life of the whole people of God; and their theology from the study or the seminary to the world of Asian thought, philosophy and religion — the world of the Asian renaissance and revolution.<sup>2</sup>

Such confession by the churches, it was argued, was part of their obedience to Christ. Their efforts to relate the Gospel to Asian culture "should not be thought of merely as a technique of evangelism and witness"; rather, the Consultation ventured to suggest, "It is the way to discover yet fuller riches in Christ, to appropriate 'those things to come' for which Jesus promised the Spirit of truth 'to guide into all truth'". It repeated, "We believe that Christ has more of His truth to reveal to us, as we seek to understand His work among men in their several Asian cultures, their different religions and in their involvement in the contemporary Asian revolution."<sup>3</sup>

Kandy saw two main factors which had inhibited Asian churches from taking their theological task seriously: (i) fear of syncretism, and (ii) the absolutization of inherited traditional and conceptual forms of confessions. It believed that "when we make absolute the written confessions of the Churches of another culture or age, we become incapable of discovering the new depths of truth God can reveal to us in Christ amidst Asian life."<sup>4</sup> It was out of this contemporary necessity to confess the

---

1. Kandy 1965 Report, p. 20.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp. 20-21.

4. Ibid., p. 21.

faith that Asian Christians would have to understand anew the task of theology for their churches:

Theology is a living thing, having to do with our very existence as Christians and Churches. We cannot conceive of it in static or neatly defined final terms. A living theology must speak to the actual questions men in Asia are asking in the midst of their dilemmas; their hopes, aspirations and achievements; their doubts, despair and suffering ...

We discern a special task of theology in relation to the Asian renaissance and revolution, because we believe God is working out His purpose in these movements of the secular world.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, from Kandy, a call for theological renewal went out to the Asian churches. It asked from them a confessing life which would venture into the post-war situation of East Asia as their obedience to Christ and to discover "more of His truth". Their struggles against confessionalism had reached the stage when these must be accompanied by attempts to renew their understanding of theology and the Christian confession and subsequently to formulate their own confessions. The Hong Kong Consultation on Faith and Order which was proposed in the 1964 Assembly and eventually held in Hong Kong in October 1966 provided the opportunity for such an attempt. The Kandy Consultation sent out the call, laid the groundwork and set the direction. It was in the Hong Kong Consultation that the whole meaning and implications of "Confessing the Faith in Asia Today" were carefully articulated by more than one hundred church leaders from different Asian countries for the first time in the history of the Church in East Asia.

It is important to note that the original title, "The Confession of the Faith in Asia Today," suggested in the 1964 Assembly was subsequently changed to the verbal form "Confessing the Faith in Asia Today."<sup>2</sup> This change shows the Consultation's recognition that the life of the Asian churches must be first of all a confessing life in the contemporary Asian

---

1. Kandy 1965 Report, p. 21.

2. Bangkok 1964 Report, p. 52.

situation. The formulation of confessions would only be the result of actual acts of confessing. The Consultation explained:-

As churches in Asia we were concerned with the total form of confession, not just a confession, either traditional or new. This was not to decry the churches' need of theological statement of belief, a confession of faith. But the main thrust [of the Consultation] was envisaged as one that would concentrate attention on the fact that the churches in Asia today live in the midst of such a welter of changing values, religions, ideologies and faiths, old and new, that if Christian faith is to be confessed in Asia, this must be done by churches that are confessing churches, that is, committed in the totality of their lives to the Christian confession of faith in God through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

Hong Kong therefore saw "confessing" as

... a continuing enterprise of which it is not possible to say at any stage — the confession has been made: nor to claim that now a normative confession has been set up by which the churches are bound in the future. There will be many confessions and many acts of confessing on the way.<sup>2</sup>

However, the Consultation clearly recognised the danger of a purely situational, existential or relativistic approach to acts of confessing, and therefore stressed:

This does not mean that there is no norm for the confessing life of the churches. The norm exists in the testimony of Holy Scripture and the continuing confessions of the Church Universal. So that it is legitimate to talk about "the Confession", "confessions", and "confessing". In the last analysis, every confession and every act of confessing is but response to Christ's confession, who is Himself the true Confessor.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Hong Kong not only affirmed a Christocentric position for the task of theologising and confessing but also related this to the witness of the Scripture, and warned:

Should this biblical basis be forgotten, it would be fatally easy for the various problems of contemporary Asia themselves to determine the form and content of the confession made; while, should this biblical basis be remembered, the contemporary life of Asia can be allowed to influence the forms of confession.<sup>4</sup>

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, p. 7.

2. Ibid., p. 13.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 19.



Indeed, Hong Kong laid great emphasis on the authority of Scripture and continuity with the traditional elements of the Christian faith. In stating its understanding on the "given unity" of the churches, it said:

There is first of all our unity in what we have been given together — one baptism in Christ, and the confession of Him as Saviour and Lord; the worship of one God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the Holy Scriptures accepted as containing all things necessary to salvation and as the standard of faith; the life which we have been given together in the reception of the Word and Sacraments, the experience of the Christian fellowship; and the mission to which we have been called together — to preach the gospel by word and life and to proclaim the Kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>

It upheld the centrality of the Christ-event in the Gospel, declaring:

Crucified and Risen, He Christ frees men from the bondage of sin, having triumphed over it and its deathly cost. Ascended and Returning, He rules and over-rules, reconciling all things to Himself till the day when He will hand the Kingdom over to the Father. He is the Lord of life and death; Lord of the powers of the world; Lord of the force of events in history; Lord of man's eternal destiny — and all in the gracious purpose of the Father who raised Him from the dead and gave to Him the Name above all other names.<sup>2</sup>

It was not surprising therefore that the Consultation found itself in agreement with the concerns traditionally associated with that section of Christians all over the world who have claimed for themselves the title "Evangelicals". The Consultation agreed:

The concern that the Christian faith be identifiable as a faith radically different from other faiths is a right concern. The insistence that men enter into an acknowledgment of this faith by a personal meeting with Jesus Christ is a right insistence. The witness that in this meeting with Jesus Christ is the beginning of a new life which can be lived only in the power of the Holy Spirit is true witness. And the emphasis on the need for the Christian community so to live and witness that they are seen as those to whom the End has happened is a true emphasis.<sup>3</sup>

With these detailed affirmations, it must be said that Hong Kong upheld the central elements of the Christian faith. But from this position, Hong Kong advanced to attempt to understand the meaning of a living faith in Christ for the peoples of East Asia today. The Consultation believed

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, p. 83.

2. Ibid., p. 26.

3. Ibid., p. 90.



that in the contemporary life situations in East Asia, Christ had shown himself as the New Man and the New Humanity:

Jesus Christ was the true man in whom the eternal purpose of the ages was made known and the divine power to accomplish that purpose was released in human life. He is the new man in the purpose of God and the bearer of the new man to all who repent and believe. By the Holy Spirit, God in Jesus Christ has so renewed all creation that man is enabled to live the life of a new creature ...

In this is the beginning of a new family, a new people, a new humanity.<sup>1</sup>

The Consultation further explained:

The potential of the new humanity has been present from the beginning. Destroyed in man by sin, it was realised in Christ, the truly and fully human One. He is the Lord; and by His death, resurrection and ascension men are made part of the new humanity. He is not the Lord of Christians only. The power of the new humanity is realised when men acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. This is the good news about which those who acknowledge Christ are called to share with others.<sup>2</sup>

But Hong Kong recognised that there were two directions in a man's acknowledgement of Christ as Saviour and Lord: "the faith confessed to Christ", and "the faith confessed before men". As described earlier, in line with the concern of the Evangelicals it stressed that confessing had "a deeply personal dimension":

No-one can believe for me and no-one can confess for me. It is I who believe in my Lord and I who confess Him Lord. Every Christian confesses as a person and confesses to others as persons, or else ceases to be a Christian.<sup>3</sup>

.....  
Christian confession, therefore, involves acknowledging that we are our true selves only by Christ. If we resist Him or live without Him, we shall be ruled by heredity, or upbringing, or surroundings, or natural desire. To turn to Christ and yield one-self to His personality is to be a real 'self'.<sup>4</sup>

There was "the faith confessed before men", the Consultation held, because Christ had said that every one who would confess Him before men, He also would confess before His Father.

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, pp. 28-29.

2. Ibid., p. 29.

3. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

4. Ibid., p. 31.

The confessing life is a whole life in which, in the depth of our being, we turn to the world in love, service and witness. The time between the coming of Christ Jesus and the consummation in the end, is the time of mission—the mission of confessing Christ before men and nations, before the whole world.<sup>1</sup>

The Consultation held that the mission of confessing Christ must be sustained by the love, joy and peace received from Christ. For

... without them we shall remain Christian minority groups, surrounded by other religions and by secularism, hesitant to be different and fearful of social rejection. Without them, as our own countries are involved in dynamic and revolutionary change, we shall remain Christian minority groups anxious for identification with our nations, hesitant to enter into encounter with the centres and wielders of power, fearful of political isolation or discrimination. But with love, joy and peace, we shall be able to be a real part of our societies, sharing the human values they hold, and struggling with them for justice in human relationships and social arrangements.<sup>2</sup>

The faith to be confessed before men, the Consultation believed, would be "about the person of Jesus Christ and what it means to be a person":

The faith confessed is ... of the new humanity in Him who lived completely for others, of the new humanity in which every man is and becomes a real person.<sup>3</sup>

The Hong Kong Consultation had produced some important insights for a deeper and renewed understanding of the missionary task of the Church in East Asia. The Asian church leaders at Hong Kong rightly recognised that the quests of the Asian peoples of the post-war era had been essentially a quest for the personal, the human, and the new in personal and social living and at national and international levels. As will be described in detail in the next chapter, in their discernment of the working of God in the East Asian situation, many Asian Christians had held that the centrality of the personal and the common humanity of man must form the foundations for the structures of the new Asian society and nationhood. In his preparatory paper for the Hong Kong Consultation, Fleming had thus

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, pp. 32-33.

2. Ibid., p. 33.

3. Ibid.

correctly observed that the Christian confession in the current Asian life situation would have to be "along the line of the truly human, and the dynamically new with its centre in the man Jesus Christ who is able in the purpose of God to make all things new".<sup>1</sup> Thus, any understanding of evangelism or Christian social concern which holds that God is making each man and woman and all things anew must have a direct role to play in the quests of the Asian peoples. The Hong Kong understanding of the New Man and New Humanity and the two directions of confession would not only truly integrate and do justice to both evangelism and social concern, but also transcend the question of the relationship between the two as described earlier in this chapter. The real question that Asian Christians should ask is not whether evangelism or social concern is the proper expression of fulfilling the mission of the Church; but rather, whether the total life of Christians and churches is confessing Christ as the New Man and the New Humanity to come. The New Man and the New Humanity must be allowed to become the priority and the goal of mission towards which all Christian acts of confessing are drawn. The confessing life of the Asian churches, Hong Kong rightly held, must be existential and situational but also Christocentric, scriptural and continuous with the Christian experience of the past. Christian confession must be personal, yet at the same time it must be open to witnessing and serving in contemporary life situations.

(c) The continuing struggle against confessionalism

Kandy 1965 and Hong Kong 1966 had produced some important insights which could renew and deepen the understanding of theological and missionary

---

1. John Fleming, "The Christian Confession and the Confessing Church in the New Testament," South East Asia Journal of Theology, Special EACC Faith and Order Issue, Vol. 8, nos. 1 and 2 (July and October 1966), p. 48.

tasks in the Asian churches. But these two consultations did not signify the end of the EACC's struggle against confessionalism. They only belonged to a new phase of this struggle. The issue had been debated in many gatherings both outside and inside East Asia. It was time for the EACC to reach beyond the level of debate to deal with those specific and actual sources of confessionalism which had been hindering the growth of selfhood and the confessing life of the Asian churches.

Even before the Kandy Consultation was held, D.T. Niles had been to the U.S.A. and Great Britain for a "confrontation" with the mission boards and other related bodies in the two regions. At the meeting at High Leigh in Great Britain, he met more than sixty representatives of British and European mission agencies. But the meeting resulted in more unanswered questions than specific and actual agreements. However, the representatives did declare that mission agencies in that region should examine their policies and actions so as "to promote Asian churches' own proper selfhood and its own participation in mission".<sup>1</sup> In East Asia itself, the EACC tried to arrange that all the field staff of the confessional organisations would be related to its own organisation.<sup>2</sup> Some did reply with positive response: the Methodist Fellowship Team attached itself officially to the EACC for close consultation on the promotion of Methodist work in the region, keeping in mind the objectives of the EACC;<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. Statement by the Consultation on the results of the EACC "Situation Conferences" on Joint Action for Mission, High Leigh, May 1964 (London: Conference of British Missionary Societies and the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism), pp. 4, 7.
  2. See Minutes of the Working Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, Manila, January 3rd and 4th, 1965 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 11 (referred to henceforward as Manila 1965 Minutes); and see also Minutes of the Continuation Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, Hong Kong, November 4-9, 1966 (Bangkok: EACC), pp. 20-21 (referred to henceforward as Hong Kong 1966 Minutes).
  3. Minutes of the Working Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, Kandy, Ceylon, December 9-12, 1965 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 4 (referred to henceforward as Kandy 1965 Minutes).

the World Methodist Council decided that their regional programmes would not be sponsored denominationally but should be worked into programmes of regional ecumenical organisations;<sup>1</sup> and the Baptists were reported to be thinking of a similar development along these lines.<sup>2</sup>

However, it was reported that the LWF did not seem to be in full accord on this matter in some Asian countries.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, it is significant that the strongest criticism of the EACC appears to have come mainly from sources of Lutheran (and often German) origin. Laying great emphasis on the correct doctrines of traditional Lutheranism, and pre-occupied with the experience of the state-controlled German Church during the turmoils of the Nazi regime, the Lutherans' approach to church union seems to have come into direct conflict with the EACC's approach and the idea of a "national" church. There appears to have been a great deal of misunderstanding. Indeed, the LWF declared that

... when facing the questions raised by the East Asia Christian Conference, it should be remembered that the issue, whether the fostering of national and/or regional unity as a step towards the unity of the Church is more ecumenical than fostering world confessional unity as a step towards the total unity of the Church, has not been decided and should continue to be discussed.<sup>4</sup>

In its meeting at Waterloo, Canada, 1967, the Executive Committee of the LWF did produce some "guide-lines" for "provisional use" of its staff. The Committee stated that the LWF "should not and will not take any action, either through counsel or in any other manner, to attempt to prevent or to dissuade member-churches from participation in movements towards a proper expression of the Church's unity in a particular place". It also proposed

---

1. Hong Kong 1966 Minutes, p. 5.

2. Ibid., p. 6.

3. Ibid., in India. See also "The Relationship between Regional and National Councils and World Confessional Families," a report presented by Victor E.W. Hayward to a meeting of a Working Party of the World Confessional Bodies at Geneva, May 31, 1967 (Exhibit III, p. 4). The complaint came from C. Yamada of the Japanese NCC.

4. Minutes of a Meeting of Representatives of World Confessional Bodies, Geneva, October 14th, 1965 (Geneva: LWF), Appendix I, p. 3.



that member-churches "should continue" their financial support to those united churches of which Lutheran churches might have become a part.<sup>1</sup>

The LWF Assembly held at Evian, France, in 1970 reaffirmed these "guidelines", but added:

A union of churches must be seen as a proper expression of the unity of the church when uniting churches have agreed upon a confessional statement of faith which witnesses to a right understanding of the Gospel to serve as a guide for preaching and the administration of the sacraments.<sup>2</sup>

The EACC had never underrated the importance of unity in truth. As already shown, it had become even clearer at Hong Kong in 1966 that the EACC upheld the authority of the Scriptures, the centrality of Christ, and the continuity of Christian experiences of the past with those of today. But the perspective of mission and the necessity of confessing the faith in the life situation of each nation which had been repeatedly emphasised by the EACC as an inseparable part of the unity and truth of the Church were absent in the LWF Evian statement. On the other hand, the EACC and its leadership had explicitly emphasised that they did not want the NCCs and regional councils to become "super churches";<sup>3</sup> these councils had been regarded mainly as instruments through which the selfhood of the churches could grow, genuine partnerships develop, and the unity of the Church Universal be better maintained and manifested. Niles did not think that the struggle against confessionalism in East Asia had come to its end. He reported to the 1968 Assembly that these confessional organisations had continued "to represent for us in the EACC a point of uneasiness",<sup>4</sup> and cited some examples of unilateral action taken in the

---

1. Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, LWF, Waterloo, Canada, June 11-17, 1967 (Geneva: LWF), p. 15.

2. Statements and Resolutions of the Assembly, LWF, Evian, France, 14th-24th Aug. 1970 (Geneva: LWF), Minutes (Document 21), Appendix A, p. 1.

3. ICA Consultation 1963 Report, p. 4; Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 73-74; Kandy 1965 Report, pp. 10-13; Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 47-48.

4. Niles, Ideas and Services, p. 16.



region by some Christian organisations outside East Asia without consultation with the EACC.<sup>1</sup> The Assembly urged that no separate regional confessional organisations or programmes should be set up in the region, and it recommended the removal of the field staff structures of mission agencies as rapidly as possible.<sup>2</sup> As at Bangkok 1964 and Kandy 1965, the Assembly had still to appeal again to its member-churches "to take real steps to act upon" the findings on Joint Action for Mission that had come out from the Situation Conferences of five years earlier.<sup>3</sup>

At the world level, the WCC Assembly held at Uppsala, Sweden, in 1968 added to the unity of "all in each place" of the 1961 New Delhi Assembly the "unity of all Christians in all places".<sup>4</sup> This addition should have satisfied those who were so fearful about "tribal" and "national" churches. But the Uppsala Assembly also regarded the "experience of universality" provided in the "regional and international confessional fellowships" as "inevitably partial". It was the ecumenical movement, the Assembly held, which would enlarge this experience; and it believed that:

Regional councils and its World Council may be regarded as a transitional opportunity for eventually actualizing a truly universal, ecumenical, conciliar form of common life and witness. The members of the World Council of Churches, committed to each other, should work for the time when a genuinely universal council may once more speak for all Christians, and lead the way into the future.<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, since about 1966, this had become the main concern of the meetings of representatives of World Confessional Bodies in Geneva.

Attention was now mainly focussed upon the relationship of the confessional

---

1. Niles, Ideas and Services, p. 14.

2. Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 2, 30, 48.

3. Ibid., p. 38; Kandy 1965 Report, pp. 9-10; supra, p. 201.

4. Norman Goodall (ed.), The Uppsala Report 1968: Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala, July 4-20, 1968 (Geneva: WCC), p. 17.

5. Ibid.

organisations and the Roman Catholic Churches in the structures of this possible universal ecumenical council.<sup>1</sup> But meanwhile, the specific concerns of the EACC had been left out of consideration. The struggle on an ecumenical or collective level seemed to have come to an end. The EACC must now deal with these organisations, mission agencies and denominations in the West individually and at national and regional levels.

Thus, as the Asian churches are growing into their selfhood still within the context of world denominations and confessions, the EACC has helped to provide "the other eye", as Niles excellently described it, with which churches and organisations both within and outside East Asia must still constantly look at their work and witness and make sure that all churches are growing into mature selfhood.<sup>2</sup>

The Kandy and Hong Kong Consultations, with their emphasis on "living theology" and "confessing churches", hoped to encourage a theological renewal among the Asian churches and thus also "to consummate the development of Asian churches toward selfhood in the theological realm".<sup>3</sup> They had produced some important insights which could renew and deepen the understanding of the function of theology and the mission of the Church in the Asian churches. But Hong Kong also recognised that for Asian churches to become "living [and] confessing churches" and to attain their selfhood, a renewal of the total life of these churches would be necessary. It reaffirmed the belief of the 1964 Assembly that the demand for this total renewal came from two sources: "both of the pressures of the Word of the Gospel as well as of the pressures of the world in which the churches of Asia are set".<sup>4</sup> The Consultation therefore ended with "The

---

1. Minutes of meetings until November 1969 show that this had been the case. These minutes are available from LWF Office, Geneva, on request.

2. Niles, Ideas and Services, p. 7.

3. Scherer, Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, p. 129.

4. Faith and Order 1966, pp. 28-29; Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 51.

Call to Renewal" to all Asian churches. It asked for a "renewal in response to the Gospel", "renewal in worship", "renewal of the laity", "renewal of the ministry", "renewal in unity" and "renewal of structures".<sup>1</sup> The 1968 Assembly repeated this call for a renewal of the total Asian church life and it urged a serious study of the Hong Kong report among its member-churches.<sup>2</sup>

The response of the EACC and its member-churches in relation to the quests of East Asia in the second period of the post-war era has been concentrated on two fronts: firstly, in the gradual recovery of the meaning of the Church and its selfhood among the Asian churches themselves; and secondly, in their attempts to discern how God has been at work in the East Asian situation. The renewal of the ministry of the laity and the structures of the local congregations, the renewal of the forms of Christian mission and service, and the renewal of the Asian churches to become "confessing churches" in the context of the One Church Universal, have been connected with this gradual recovery of the meaning of being the church and having its own selfhood in East Asia. But Asian church leaders were also convinced that in this recovery, they had come to understand that they had also been called to be active participants in God's saving and creating mission to the East Asian world. A task had been laid on them to discern the ways of His working and to participate responsibly in His purposes. The Hong Kong Consultation had expressed very well what the EACC had attempted to do in this direction:

The churches must make clear that they have no meaning or existence apart from Him who is their Head, and no tasks except "the works which He has prepared for them to walk in". And because He Himself is at work in His world, they will need constantly to face the question, "How and where is He at work?"; for only as they are turned away from themselves to Him and to His world will they be led by the Holy Spirit to make a true confession.<sup>3</sup> (*italics mine*)

- 
1. Faith and Order 1966, pp. 103-112.
  2. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 30.
  3. Faith and Order 1966, p. 22.

Chapter Two:    DISCERNING THE WORK OF CHRIST  
IN THE EAST ASIAN SITUATION

---

In its understanding of the meaning of the Gospel, the 1959 Kuala Lumpur Assembly affirmed Christ's redemption and Kingship as "of the whole human race and of the whole created world". "The meaning of world history, including that of modern Asian history, is to be discovered in that Kingship" therefore, "the church must endeavour to discern how Christ is at work in the revolutions of contemporary Asia, ... be there in it, responding to him and making his presence and lordship known."<sup>1</sup>

The 1964 Assembly reissued this same statement of 1959 and in this way reaffirmed the belief that this discernment and response to participation in His acts were a task required from all Asian churches and Christians.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, this statement had been the basic argument of the EACC for Christian social involvement, and one of its chief exponents had been M.M. Thomas, who had defended more than once this position of the necessity of discerning "what is God doing" in the "revolutions" or the quests of East Asia.

Thomas argued: "For a Church which acknowledges the Lordship of Christ over the whole world and all history, it is necessary to discern Christ working in the world so that we may witness to what He is doing and be with Him, as He acts."<sup>3</sup> He recognised that the possible danger

---

1. Supra, p. 156.

2. Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 17-18.

3. M.M. Thomas, "Some notes on a Christian interpretation of nationalism in Asia," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 46.

of such an attempt was to lead Christians into "giving divine sanction to all-too-human historical movements",<sup>1</sup> and observed that the WCC New Delhi Assembly had been most cautious about such attempts to "see the hand of God in the particular movements of history of which we personally approve or claim his blessing for every cause which seems righteous at the moment".<sup>2</sup> But such a danger would only arise from "an inadequate theology and an improper use of theology". Thomas argued:

A too easy identification of God with a particular historical movement is not answered by a too total separation of God and faith from secular history ... The purpose of theology is not to find divine sanction for a historical movement, but to help discern what is of Christ and what of the devil in that movement so that we may know the nature of our response of faith. True theology is not a means of enhancing self-righteousness and political messianism but a spiritual source of constructive and discriminating participation.<sup>3</sup>

He agreed with the Kuala Lumpur statement that Christ's Kingship "today is hidden and will be revealed at the end of time".<sup>4</sup> However, he could not accept that "what God does in secular history is absolutely hidden and that even a partial discernment is impossible to the eye of faith", for this belief would leave Christians "without any guidance as to the nature or direction of their participation in secular affairs".<sup>5</sup> The Church would then bear

no other responsibility ... except that of preaching the Gospel of the end of the world and gathering the believers. Any attempt on the part of Christians or Churches to seek to "discern" what God is doing in the world of culture, society and states for man, must be dismissed as a search for a justification by wisdom or works. This would leave the time between the first coming of Christ and His second coming really meaningless, without any pattern of God's action, and without any kind of Christian responsibility in secular events.

- 
1. M.M. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution (London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 20.
  2. Ibid.; also Visser't Hooft (ed.), The New Delhi Report, p. 85.
  3. Thomas, op. cit., p. 22.
  4. Supra, p. 156.
  5. Thomas, op. cit., p. 22.



Therefore, he held, "the Kuala Lumpur Assembly could not have meant a total inability of faith to 'see' the King and the Kingdom in the present, for immediately it goes on to say, 'The Church must endeavour to discern how Christ is at work in the revolutions of contemporary Asia.'" <sup>1</sup>

Thomas rightly observed that there was a general consensus among Asian Christians that God in Christ was present in the Asian quests. The Kuala Lumpur understanding of the Gospel was one clear expression of this theological ferment in many Asian churches: Takenaka, at Kuala Lumpur, also held that

... since we believe God is at work in the midst of a rapidly changing Asia today ... the task of the church is not to keep oneself to stay away from the change nor just make a negative judgment in order to keep the status quo but to seriously involve oneself in the common effort with the members of God's people throughout the world to discover what God is doing in the midst of the rapidly changing world, and ... to be obedient to His call in this world. <sup>2</sup>

Similarly, Christians in India, while affirming Christ as "the Lord not only of the whole of history and of mankind but also of our nations and of our national history", also recognised that while this Lordship "does not mean the equating of the will of the nation with the purpose of God", it does give to the Christian "the specific responsibility of constantly subjecting his own decisions and those of his nation to rigorous self-criticism". <sup>3</sup>

Thus, the task of discernment was conceived not as one of sheer identification of all the Asian events with the will of God but as one of "constructive and discriminating participation" in the Asian quests. The

---

1. M.M. Thomas, "Understanding the Tides of History," South East Asia Journal of Theology 5, No. 4 (April 1964), p. 22.

2. Masao Takenaka, "A New Understanding of the World and the Need of Theological Renewal," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 33.

3. P.D. Devanandan and M.M. Thomas (eds.), Christian Participation in Nation-Building (Bangalore: The Bangalore Press, 1960, for NCC, India, and The Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore), p. 295.



Kuala Lumpur Assembly had also clearly declared that this discernment must include "judging idolatry and false gods, leading peoples to decision for or against Him". It disclaimed the topics raised in the report on "Witness of the Churches amidst Social Change" as a "complete discernment"; it would only say, "We are all participating in a continuing conversation":

Our discussions as Christians about economics politics and society are therefore conversations about Jesus Christ, that is to say, an attempt of faith to discern Him in the social change of our nations, and to discover Him in what it means to respond to his call in relation to these changes.<sup>1</sup>

The EACC's attempt at discerning the work of Christ in the East Asian situation from 1958 to about 1968 can be best examined in the three main areas of its concern: (i) in relation to new national foundations, (ii) in relation to development, and (iii) in relation to the hope for mankind.

#### 1. In Relation to New National Foundations

Asian nationalism had, by the mid-1950s, fulfilled its role in the struggle for political independence and entered into the new phase of nation-building. With independence achieved, Thomas observed, "we are called to give positive content to what we mean by the nation."<sup>2</sup> There were three main goals in this struggle for nation-building: "consolidation of national unity, promotion of political democracy and planning of economic progress", or in short, the three goals of "order, freedom and progress".<sup>3</sup> But the situation in East Asia had never been simple, nor now

---

1. Supra, p. 157.

2. Thomas, "Some notes on a Christian interpretation ...", in Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 43.

3. Ibid.

would the task of nation-building be one without many complex problems. Takenaka observed that the Asian peoples had found themselves involved in the complexities of Rapid Social Change; the many revolutions which came to the West over the course of four hundred years "are coming to Asia today [all] at the same time."<sup>1</sup> In East Asia, he said, there had been great political, social and economic upheavals brought about by two different elements of change: firstly the impact of Western civilization, its ideas and technology, and secondly the changes brought by the formation of new independent nations in Asia. Takenaka held that the confusion and uncertainty and the transitional features of Asian life all stemmed from the effect of these two elements of change "occurring simultaneously" in every sphere of Asian life.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, the task of nation-building was difficult and complex.

In this situation, Thomas observed, there was a pre-occupation with politics, for politics had become "the midwife helping in the birth of the new society"; it was considered to be

... the primary means of bringing about necessary changes in the traditional structure, of providing the framework of power, law and ideology within which the elements of the emerging society can be protected and promoted and of minimizing the inevitable evils inherent in the transitional period.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas further explained:

In stabler societies, there is a consensus among the people as regards the ends of society, and the difference between parties is largely with respect to the means ... But in Asia today politics is determinative of the future shape of society.<sup>4</sup>

Nation-building meant, therefore, "these struggles to build new political, economic and social structures and institutions". "But," he added, "new

---

1. Takenaka, "A New Understanding ...", in Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 34; v. *supra*, pp. 36-37.

2. Takenaka, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

3. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p. 44.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

structures require new foundations."<sup>1</sup> He saw the contemporary resurgence of Asian religions as one clear expression of the attempt to provide cultural and religious foundations for the structures of a new Asian nationhood. For this reason, Christians who acknowledged the Lordship of Christ and were also citizens of the nation must participate in this search for new foundations and structures. The Kuala Lumpur Assembly agreed that "it must be the concern and duty of everyone to participate in the search".<sup>2</sup> As described earlier, this appeal was also echoed in the Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service where Christian service was believed to include concrete social and political action. At ~~Narasapur~~ Christians in the Indian sub-continent were told: "The Church is called to participate in nation-building and in that process to make Christ known as Lord of all life."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, some Indian Christians had been very active in this direction. Their efforts are recorded in detail in the well-known report, "Christian Participation in Nation-Building."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, at Sukabumi, Indonesian Christian leaders agreed that Christian service towards the nation was to contribute to the development of ideas which would be a guide to the establishment of a new Indonesian society and culture.<sup>5</sup>

Asian Christians' growing desire for participation in nation-building can also be seen in their gradual change of outlook regarding political involvement on the part of Christians and churches. The Siantar Conference of 1957 reaffirmed the Bangkok 1949 statement that "it is, of course,

---

1. Thomas, "Some notes on a Christian interpretation ...", in Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 44.

2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 65.

3. New Forms of Christian Service and Participation, Nasrapur Consultation 1960, p. 1.

4. Edited by Devanandan and Thomas; v. supra, p. 237, n. 3.

5. Christian Service in the Revolution, Sukabumi Consultation 1962, p. 3.

not the task of the church, as such, to enter into the arena of party-politics or to pronounce judgement on the technical aspects of government and society."<sup>1</sup> On the question of the church's witness in political life, both the Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok 1964 Assemblies considered that this would be "mainly articulated as its members become involved in the responsibilities of citizenship".<sup>2</sup> But it had become apparent that not all Asian Christians would hold to such an understanding. Some Indian Christians had begun to argue that Christian participation in nation-building should include a study of the technical aspects and problems in politics, economics and society:

It is in the technical decisions that one is moral or immoral and Christian or un-Christian. And without an understanding of the technical issues that are involved in the field in which Christians are called to act responsibly, merely goodwill or even piety does not go far ... Christian social study therefore must give due attention to the technical aspect of things.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the Asian Conference on Church and Society held by the EACC at Seoul, Korea, in October 1967, clearly went one step further from Kuala Lumpur 1959 and Bangkok 1964 when it recommended that while the Church "should not identify itself completely with any political party ... we must encourage Christians and churches to be involved in politics in such a way that their Christian perspective informs their political judgments and their participation in political affairs"<sup>4</sup> (*italics mine*).

Asian Christians were urged to participate in the task of nation-building and to search for the new foundations of their nations. The following investigations show their main efforts, discernments and experiences in this area.

- 
1. The Social Goals of New Asia, Siantar Conference 1957, pp. 17-18; Bangkok 1949 Report, p. 114.
  2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 64; Bangkok 1964 Report, p. 25.
  3. Devanandan and Thomas (eds.), Christian Participation ..., pp. 297-8.
  4. Asian Conference on Church and Society: Report to the Asian Churches, Seoul, Korea, October 10-16, 1967 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 43 (referred to henceforward as Seoul 1967 Report).

(a) The centrality of the "personal"

In their discernment regarding the foundations for the structures of the new Asian nations, the "personal" as the central foundation had been the constant concern and emphasis of the EACC and its leaders. Takenaka was one who was very much concerned about what he described as the "real man" in the rapid social change in East Asia. He explained at the Kuala Lumpur Assembly that, in a highly industrialised society such as those in the West, there was "a phenomenon of disintegration of community and isolation or atomization of the individual". But in the area of rapid social change now current in East Asia, people were looking to industrialisation to provide the opportunity to gain freedom from feudalistic oppression and from low standards of living. The traditional forms of Asian community, he observed, had put many restrictions upon individual freedom, but under present conditions of rapid social change there was "an urgent pursuit to find the new basis of dignity of the individual in the communal life". He said: "If the lonely crowd is a catchword for the Western Industrial Society, the bounded crowd is the symbolic label for the Asian industrial workers."<sup>1</sup> Takenaka expounded further his concern for the personal in his John R. Mott Lecture to the Continuation Committee meeting at Bangalore in 1961. There were, he said, "the passing and broken images of man in Asia" effected by the "various forms and forces of dehumanisation and impersonalisation", and he classified these forces into four categories: (i) "Naturalisation of Man", meaning man submitting himself to an attitude of indifference, and captivity within natural and social determinism; (ii) "Mechanisation of Man", the uprooted, often lonely and uncertain man in industrialisation and urbanisation; (iii) "Animalisation of Man", a man taking the material

---

1. Takenaka, "A New Understanding ...", in Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 35-36.

things or fulfilment of individual desires as the ultimate goal and end of life; and (iv) "Angelisation or Deification of Man", a man being spiritualised by religion to a super-human existence by his own efforts.

But, Takenaka then argued, the real man could be found only in Christ.

The concern of Christian ethics, he held, was

... the restoration of the true humanity, not by the efforts of man, but on the basis of God's grace, namely, that man becomes real man, because God became man ... In Christ we find not a narrow sense of religious man but real man free from all bondage, being open to a new relation with God and with his fellow men in concrete existence in the world.<sup>1</sup>

The presence of these Christians or new men in all aspects of Asian life could then serve as "a sign of the new humanity in Jesus Christ" and the "first fruits" of the "new creation" whose final consummation or "great harvest is to come".<sup>2</sup>

M.M. Thomas was another EACC leader who had voiced great concern about the personal in the foundations of new Asian society and state. The basic idea of the natural harmony and cosmic unity of traditional Asian religious and cultural thought, he said, had resulted among the Asian peoples in an emphasis on the priority of and reverence for cosmic order. The definition of justice, he observed, had been understood therefore primarily in terms of order and had given little room for freedom as a value in itself. One characteristic of traditional Asian culture and spirituality had been "its lack of personal consciousness": as in Japan, it had stressed obedience to the group authority like that of the Emperor or the father as the highest virtue.<sup>3</sup> However, Thomas believed, the spiritual awakening current in East Asia was based on a new awareness of man's personal being — "Man's mastery of nature through

---

1. Takenaka, "The First Fruits in Asia," in Christ's Ministry — And Ours (J.R. Mott Lectures, 1961), pp. 11-14.

2. Ibid., pp. 15, 22.

3. Thomas, The Christian Response to Asian Revolution, pp. 72-73.



science and technology, the consciousness of the fundamental rights of human persons, the new ideas of social justice and community, and the new sense of historical mission are in their several ways affirmation of this basic awareness." He warned, "As these ideas take shape in new structures of society and state, the demand for new cultural foundations which will give meaning and direction to the new societies becomes more pressing." He himself held that "a radically new understanding of man and his historical and ultimate destiny alone can provide this meaning and direction," and proposed that "the personal as the vehicle of the eternal is the fundamental idea which must inform new Asian cultures, if the human promises of the Asian revolution are not to be betrayed." How Asia is to build "cultures informed by and embodying the belief in the integral relation between the 'personal' and the 'eternal'" has been therefore "the task and the question" facing all Asian peoples and nations.<sup>1</sup> To Thomas, in the cultural sphere of this task, "there should be no hesitation in affirming that the spiritual core of the Asian tradition cannot be the spiritual core of the new Asian cultures if they have to support the contemporary spiritual awakening of the Asian peoples." What was demanded, he said, was "a radical break with the authority of the central spiritual core of traditional cultures".<sup>2</sup> Thomas did not explain specifically the meaning of "the spiritual core"; but apparently he was referring only to that core which has inhibited a full expression and development of the personal, for he said later, "The new culture should be continuous with the tradition." "My contention," he argued, "is that even those who reject the hard core of the Asian cultural tradition can and will have to take the other parts of tradition, redefine them in the light of whatever central principle they accept and reintegrate them into

---

1. Thomas, The Christian Response to Asian Revolution, pp. 73-74.

2. Ibid., pp. 74-75.

a new pattern with a new centre."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, earlier, in his address to the Consultation on New Forms of Christian Service at Quezon City, Thomas warned that "if the broken structures [of the passing traditional Asian life] are not re-interpreted and reintegrated in the new structure, they will become militant and create more difficulties ... We must do justice to the old forces."<sup>2</sup> Thomas observed that there had been three cultural movements in East Asia instrumental in opening up Asian cultures to the personal dimension of human reality. These were: the resurgence of Asian religions and cultures; the movements of secularisation and secular humanism; and Christianity and its movements for mission and service.<sup>3</sup> While it had been weak in East Asia, Christianity, Thomas believed, could be "of tremendous relevance to the Asian revolution".

Christian mission "has made and still can make a crucial contribution to the search of Asia for the spiritual foundations for the new awakening of Asian peoples to the personal dimension of life ... precisely because it has the person of Jesus Christ as its central message."<sup>4</sup> In his John R. Mott Lecture to the 1964 Assembly, Thomas reiterated his conviction that "the discovery of the personal in man, and the endeavour to recognize a community of persons, of KOINONIA, as the end of political and social organisation is the profoundly revolutionary act of God's grace in Asia."<sup>5</sup>

Takenaka and Thomas are taken here as two clear examples of the great number of Asian Christians who shared this growing deep concern for the personal. Indeed, Indian Christians would regard the national goals of India as "[standing or falling]" with the concept of the status of the

---

1. Thomas, The Christian Response to Asian Revolution, pp. 78-79.

2. M.M. Thomas, "The Changing Scene in Asia," in New Forms of Christian Service in the Philippines: Quezon City Consultation 1961, p. 11.

3. Thomas, The Christian Response ..., pp. 79-90.

4. Ibid., p. 93.

5. Thomas, "Understanding the Tides of History," p. 25.

individual human person" and they regarded "the Christian belief in God as Creator and Redeemer" as "extremely relevant to this idea of the dignity of the individual person". They explained:

God assumed humanity in the PERSON of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who through His Cross and Resurrection opened a way to man for divine fellowship. ... In Christ, he is called to eternal sonship of God. The obligation to respond to this call in freedom is the core of his personality, the basis of his eternal status as a person ... Man's rational faculty, social status, political and economic functions, certainly confer dignity upon man, but only because they are means for his personal development. His personality should find expression in and through them.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, in the Philippines, Christians were urged to witness to "the paramount value of persons who have been created by God ... and to the spiritual significance of interpersonal relationships, as they express the true nature of the church which is a prototype of the ideal community, seeking to permeate the whole of society with a Christ-way of life".<sup>2</sup> The ferment underlying this growing deep concern among Asian Christians for the personal in the foundations of the new Asian society was well summed up by T.B. Simatupang of Indonesia, another leader of the EACC. Addressing the first Asian Christian Youth Assembly held at Dumaguete City, the Philippines, in late 1964, he declared that he had gained "the conviction that the Church has a God-given task in playing a role in the search after new foundations in the nation-building in my country".<sup>3</sup> He explained:

In nation-building, the nation is basically faced with the problems of order and unity, progress and development, and freedom and justice in the context of the social-cultural-religious

- 
1. Devanandan and Thomas (eds.), Christian Participation in Nation-Building, pp. 269-270.
  2. New Forms of Christian Service in the Philippines, Quezon City Consultation 1961, p. 29.
  3. T.B. Simatupang, "Life in Christ — Call to Service and Nation-Building," in Soritua A.E. Nababan (ed.), Christ the Life: The Report of the Asian Christian Youth Assembly, Part One, Silliman University, Dumaguete City, the Philippines, 1964-1965 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 68.

realities in the nation. But facing these problems, inevitably the more fundamental problems about man, his nature and destiny, about history, its meaning and purpose, emerge ... Probably it is in this area that the special contribution of Christians is most urgently needed ... A social doctrine must be developed by our churches, even a theology of history, as a contribution to nation-building and, at the same time, as a guide for Christians.<sup>1</sup>

At the Kuala Lumpur Assembly, this concern for the personal and new foundations of society was very evident in the statement on the witness of the churches amidst social change and resurgent religions which was reissued in a rearranged form with other statements by the 1964 Assembly.<sup>2</sup> While the position taken by this statement was not as radical as that of Thomas, who asked for a radical break with the central core of Asia's traditional cultures, both Assemblies declared: "Indigenous cultural foundations are necessary for the emergence and sustenance of healthy democratic secular society." There was the "extreme importance of exploring and evaluating the cultural past of the great religions ... in order to set forth in greater relief the ethical values in them which have relevance to the national search for freedom and social justice".<sup>3</sup> The Assemblies regarded the Asian peoples' struggles for social and economic development as "an expression of man's struggle to give meaning to his life".<sup>4</sup> The statement issued by the Kuala Lumpur Assembly touched on many issues of Christian responsibility in political, social and economic affairs such as the idea and form of democracy, the functions of the state, international relations, patterns and goals of economic development, industrialisation and community development, population growth and family planning, foreign aid and technical assistance and the impact of technology on traditional common life. As will be shown in the course of

---

1. Simatupang, "Life in Christ," p. 65.

2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 60-78; Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 17-43.

3. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 62.

4. Ibid., p. 65; Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 26.

this chapter, one of the basic concerns in considering these issues was the question of the personal or the "human". As also will be seen later, this concern for the personal developed further from about the time of the Conference on Christians in Industry and Lay Training held at Kyoto, Japan, 1966, into a more comprehensive and specific concern for the full development of Asian men and women in relation to the total structures of their societies and nations as a whole.<sup>1</sup> But before an attempt is made to examine the growth of this discernment, it is important to examine first the EACC's efforts in approaching the adherents of other Asian religions for joint participation in nation-building and, also, for a better understanding of Christian faith in relation to other faiths in East Asia. For out of these efforts there emerged another important insight regarding the foundations for the new Asian nations.

(b) The "common humanity" of man

The efforts of the EACC towards joint participation with men of other religions in the task of nation-building, and also for a better understanding of the Christian faith in relation to other faiths, had brought about a fresh understanding of the "common humanity" of man among Christians in East Asia. This understanding, together with that of the centrality of the "personal", had been the main concerns of the EACC and its member-churches in relation to the Asian peoples' search for the foundations of their new society and nation.

At Kuala Lumpur, Asian Christian leaders declared, "indigenous cultural foundations are necessary for the emergence and sustenance" of a healthy Asian society. They believed in "the extreme importance of

---

1. Discussed in detail in § 2 of this chapter: v. infra, pp. 280 ff.



exploring and evaluating" the ethical values in other religions which might have relevance to the national search for freedom, justice and identity.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the call from Kuala Lumpur to all Asian churches was for an appreciation of and a dialogue with adherents of other religions and joint participation with men of other faiths and of no faith in the search for the foundations of their new nations.

Asian Christian scholars, in general, could not agree entirely with Hendrik Kraemer's position as it was expounded by him at the IMC meeting at Tambaram in 1938, with its concept of discontinuity between the Christian revelation and other religions. As minority communities living in the midst of adherents of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam or Confucianism, and at a time of rising nationalistic feelings which demanded from all Asian peoples including Christians an appreciation of and identification with local or national cultural heritage, "an undue stress on 'discontinuity' would have meant cultural isolation"<sup>2</sup> as well as a deepening suspicion about the loyalty of Christians to national aspirations. However, it must be said that Kraemer never underestimated the necessity of understanding other religions. Particularly after the war, noting the struggles for independence and nation-building and the resurgence of non-Christian religions in East Asia, Kraemer interpreted the Christian attitude towards other religions as one desirous of genuine "communication between" religions and as a step towards what he believed to be "the coming dialogue" between the East and the West. Kraemer, Carl F. Hallencreutz has rightly observed, had thus "stimulated" Christian discussion on religions.<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Supra, p. 247.

2. By S.J. Samartha of the WCC Department on Studies in Mission and Evangelism in the introduction which he wrote for Carl F. Hallencreutz's booklet, New Approaches to Men of Other Faiths, Research Pamphlets No. 18 (Geneva: WCC, 1970), p. 10.

3. For an account of some Asian Christian scholars' reactions to Kraemer's thinking before and after the war, see Hallencreutz's booklet, pp. 20-62.



Asian Christians who might not have been in full agreement with his position were not unthankful to Kraemer's concern and initiatives. Takenaka said that Kraemer's emphasis on communication had helped remove "the ghetto mentality within the Asian churches".<sup>1</sup>

As described in Section II, Asian Christian leaders including P.D. Devanandan, J.R. Chandran and M.M. Thomas would not regard the resurgence of Asian religions, which was particularly prominent during the first twelve years after the War, as a threat to or "in violent conflict" with Christianity.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, they believed that God was at work in this resurgence and there were "precious elements" in other religions. They appealed for dialogue with adherents of other religions and urged Christians to join forces with them in the task of nation-building. In the midst of the quests of post-war East Asia, they realised that a new challenge was facing the Asian churches for a reconsideration of their whole attitude towards other religions and their adherents.

At Kuala Lumpur, Asian Christian leaders claimed that East Asia had greatly changed since Tambaram. Asian man was "searching for spiritual foundations for this new world in the making". The religious movements as seen in the region then, they said, stood for two things:

Firstly, "there are indications of the crisis brought by the inadequacy of their traditional and theological beliefs"; secondly, "they represent efforts to recover the support of faith, by a radical renewal of their beliefs in terms of present-day demands and needs".<sup>3</sup>

This was also the view held by both Thomas and Devanandan. The four main types of religious movements at that time — reform, revival, renaissance and revolt — had been basically a response to the great political changes

---

1. Masao Takenaka, "Christian Encounter with Men of Non-Christian Faiths in Japan," Church and Society II, Nos. 3 and 4 (December 1965), p. 52.

2. Supra, pp. 68-70.

3. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 75.

and the process of secularisation in the region.<sup>1</sup> In all these, "there was a genuine religious renaissance with its attempt to discover a theology of society for our times", although at the same time there was "a political exploitation of religion" where religion was used as an instrument of power-politics.<sup>2</sup> At Kuala Lumpur, therefore, it was clearly recognised that "religion and society in Asian lands are closely inter-related".<sup>3</sup> This recognition lay behind the earlier statement on the importance of cultural foundations and the values of Asian religions for the structures of a new Asian society and nationhood. The Assembly recommended that the new approach to other religions should be "from the Christian understanding of the nature and destiny of man".<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the question of man has become the starting point from which the EACC and many of its member-churches have developed further their approach to other religions. This development has been greatly assisted by the strong desire to engage with adherents of other religions in the common task of nation-building. Consequently, the understanding of man's "common humanity", conceived generally as the brotherhood and solidarity of all men given through Christ in creation and renewed by Him in a cosmic redemption as the New Humanity or New Creation, emerged and has remained until now in the EACC and among many of its member-churches the basis for a Christian approach to other religions and their adherents and, indeed, to other important aspects of Asian life such as politics, international affairs and development.

---

1. Manikam (ed.), Christianity and the Asian Revolution, pp. 118-120.

2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 44-45.

3. Ibid., p. 75.

4. Ibid.

(i) The basis for Christian and non-Christian co-operation. "Common Humanity" was certainly the emerging understanding in the three consultations on "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Man" jointly convened by the WCC and the EACC in India, Hong Kong, and Burma respectively in 1960 and 1961. The central theme of the consultation held at Nagpur, India, was "The Hindu and the Christian Views of Man."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the Indian Christians' approach had been very clear even before this consultation was held: they had maintained that inter-religious co-operation would have greater Christian validity if it was "founded on the 'secular' principle of the acknowledgement of the common humanity of all men, irrespective of their adherence to one religion or another or none". For this would "provide a community within which all religions and secular ideologies have the freedom to contribute to a common definition of what constitutes the essential nature and values of this common humanity."<sup>2</sup> At Hong Kong, one discussion was centred on the question of whether or not "the deep insights into the humanity of man as expressed in Confucian humanism were a good starting point for a real encounter with those who reassert their Confucianism today".<sup>3</sup> At Rangoon, Burma, the delegates held: "We must see our solidarity with the non-Christian as, in the end, based on something more firm and sure than a common interest in religion: namely, upon our common humanity. This means, from the Christian point of view, that we have a oneness with the non-Christian because God made

- 
1. P.D. Devanandan and J.B. Carman, "A Colloquium on the Hindu and the Christian Views of Man," Church and Society, No. 2 (March 1961), p. 18. A fuller report of this colloquium and the main addresses were printed in Religion and Society, the bulletin of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, edited by P.D. Devanandan and M.M. Thomas, Vol. VII, Nos. 3 and 4 (October and December 1960).
  2. Devanandan and Thomas, Christian Participation in Nation Building, p. 303.
  3. R.P. Kramers, "Christian Encounter with the Living Faiths of the Chinese," Church and Society, No. 2 (March 1961), p. 14.

us all."<sup>1</sup> The directors of the study centres, in their summing up of the findings of these consultations, agreed that a theological restatement of the relation of the Gospel to the living faiths of men

... should not remain entangled in theoretical alternatives such as continuity and discontinuity or general and special revelation. It should rather start from the Biblical message that as God is the creator of all men, so is His salvation in Jesus Christ offered to all men, and in Him there is a New Creation.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, Thomas was correct when he summarised all these Asian deliberations as having carried the Tambaram debate into a new dimension in which three Christian responsibilities emerged regarding the task of communicating the Gospel in East Asia. The first was

... that of co-operation with the adherents of other religions and no religion in building a more humane structure of secular society and community of culture ... Christian participation in building the structures which express common humanity are in themselves a witness to our Faith. But it also provides the right context for a meaningful dialogue with others on the ultimate meaning of life.

Secondly,

... the dialogue should be seen essentially as between persons open to one another and to Truth, and not as between Christianity and other religions as systems. Thirdly, we have our duty of confessing our faith that the Crucified and Risen Christ is Lord and Saviour of the world.<sup>3</sup>

Individual Asian Christian leaders had expressed similar views. D.T. Niles argued that the Gospel was not addressed to religions as such: "It is addressed to the world of whose life and thought these religions are a part. The world is made up of the world of nature and of persons in all their manifold relationships. This world the Gospel claims for itself and calls to repentance." Niles did not deny "the pressing need to study each of these religious traditions and the specific forms of

- 
1. "God, Buddhism and the Buddhists," Rangoon Consultation on Theravada Buddhism, Church and Society, No. 3 (September 1961), p. 11.
  2. "The Word of God and the Renascent Religions of Asia," Church and Society, No. 4 (March 1962), p. 44.
  3. Editor's Comments, Church and Society, No. 3 (September 1961), p. 1.

faith which condition each man's response to the Gospel." But he reiterated, "The basic truth remains that it is man whom the Gospel addresses."<sup>1</sup> P.D. Devanandan held that the "supreme purpose" of communicating the Gospel must be more than transmitting a body of information or arguments or even relating what God had done and was doing for men in Christ; rather, "such 'communication about'" might eventually result "in restoring 'communication between' God and man". He said Christians might not forget that among men of faith and no faith there existed a common universe of discourse based on spontaneous reactions to the totality of life. He explained:

We are all involved in a common social crisis, tied together by a community of interests; our common humanity serves a common denominator; and on the frontiers of renascent faiths, doctrinal barriers no longer foreclose religious commerce ...

If God's redemptive activity in Jesus Christ is a fact with which we should reckon in every human situation, it is not so much by total destruction that he manifests his power but by radical renewal of what we cherish as valuable. That is why the Gospel we proclaim is the Good News of the Resurrection, the hope of the New Creation. A world renewed in Christ, the New Creation, is the sum and substance of the message of the Christian witness.<sup>2</sup>

Takenaka certainly agreed that if Christians accepted the cosmic lordship of Christ, they must

... regard all humanity, including men of other faiths, as created according to his image, and they are the object of the costly love of Christ whose cross stands also for them. Christ died and has risen for all humanity. This indicates that the dialogue between Christians and men of other faiths can fruitfully take place only in the consciousness of the New Humanity which has been inaugurated in the person and work of Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

The concern for and understanding of the "common humanity" of man (as well as the "personal", as described earlier), on the part of these Asian Christians was well summed up by M.M. Thomas when he said: "We

---

1. Niles, Upon the Earth, pp. 234-235.

2. P.D. Devanandan, "Called to Witness," ER XIV, No. 2 (January 1962), pp. 161-162. This address was given by Devanandan at the WCC New Delhi Assembly in 1961.

3. Masao Takenaka, "Christian Encounter with Men of Non-Christian Faiths in Japan," p. 50.



emphasize today not a common religiousness but a common humanity given through Christ in creation and renewed by him in redemption, and the spiritual awakening of men to an awareness of self-transcendence in their being human." Actual events in East Asia, such as the resurgence of religions and the rapid process of secularization alongside it, had shown that "this awareness expresses itself sometimes in religion, but other times in revolts against religion; so that the spiritual quest underlying the urge for humanization of life cuts across religious and secular movements and faiths."<sup>1</sup> Thus the Kuala Lumpur Assembly observed accurately that "religion and society in Asian lands are closely inter-related".<sup>2</sup> In the search for the foundations, structures and identity of a new Asian nationhood, changing social ideals and nascent religious beliefs had interacted upon each other. Asian Christians came to hold that the common humanity of man and the value of the personal must be upheld in this process of interaction.

(ii) Efforts towards better understanding of religions. Asian Christians' understanding of the "personal" and the "common humanity" of man can be regarded as an important contribution to the Asian peoples' search for new foundations for their nations. However, in the sphere of religions, such emphasis on common humanity, on the importance of "persons" in religions and on co-operation with men of other faiths or no faith in the building of a more humane structure of society, could develop into an understanding which might adopt an indifferent or negative attitude to religions as such and to their study in depth. Such an attitude may be found in what has been described by Hallencreutz as "mission beyond religion" or as the "secular-theological" approach to

---

1. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p. 95.

2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 75.



other religions.<sup>1</sup> A tendency towards such an attitude could be seen at the EACC 1964 Assembly.

In a statement on "Christian Encounter with Men of Other Beliefs," the Assembly first declared that, as all men are in a state of estrangement from God, therefore "even their response to Him is shot through with disobedience. There is always in a man's faith towards God that element of sin." It then went on to say:

Here lies the importance of recognising that "religion" is not necessarily the point of meeting between those who would present the gospel and those to whom it is to be presented ... "Religion" is not necessarily a good thing. The conversation about the Christian faith is often most meaningfully conducted in the simple perspective of men in their secular lives. In the last analysis, the Christian encounter is an encounter with men as men, both in their religious life and in their non-religious life, both in their belief and in their unbelief, both in what they hold to be sacred and in what they hold to be secular. This means that to present the gospel of God in Jesus Christ to men is to challenge them with God's searching judgement of all religions, including Christianity which is implicit in the gospel. Without this, the new life offered to men in Jesus Christ must remain incomprehensible ... It is Jesus whom men must encounter. The concern of the Christian is not to confront men with Christianity but with the event and person of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

The intention behind this strong emphasis on "the ambiguity of religion" seems to be clear. The new Christian approach to other religions should not be one of direct encounter between Christians and adherents of other religions on an intellectual comparative study of doctrines; rather, it should be one of dialogue, of mutual consideration by both sides of certain existential human problems seen from the standpoint of the beliefs held by each side. The former approach might well end in a deadlock, or, at best, in a better understanding of certain doctrines held by each side. However, the latter approach might be of benefit in three directions. Firstly, Christians and adherents of other religions could join

- 
1. Hallencreutz, New Approaches to Men of Other Faiths, pp. 63-70. This has been similarly described by Owen C. Thomas in his book, Attitudes towards Other Religions (London: SCM Press, 1969), pp. 26-28.
  2. Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 9-10.

forces to work for the realisation of those matters in the community or the nation which they had come to agree about in their dialogues. Secondly, certain doctrines previously regarded as irreconcilable might reappear in an entirely different perspective in the light of mutual consideration of the existential human problems which were the concerns of both sides. Thirdly, such dialogues would bring new insights to enrich the Christian understanding of God and man and lead the Church to a greater catholicity. It would help Christians, as M.M. Thomas said, to distinguish "the essential unchanging core of the Christian faith" and "to be free and flexible regarding the rest".<sup>1</sup>

Thus the following argument is found in the statement issued by the 1964 Assembly:

Whereas many Christians, when they think of an encounter with men of other beliefs, tend to conceive of that encounter largely in terms of such doctrines concerning sin, atonement and so on, much in the hold of other faiths on their adherents lies outside their intellectual encounter. It lies at the point where the mystery and burden and responsibility of human existence are felt ... This is why, while men are conditioned by their systems of belief and practice, no man can be estimated simply by the faith which he professes or denies. Man cannot be merely intellectually encountered or rationally confronted.<sup>2</sup>

The same understanding of the nature of inter-religious dialogues had also been noted by Fleming when he reported on the necessity of finding new structures in the Asian churches through which the life of the Gospel might be channelled into the Asian world. What had become necessary, he observed, were "'structures of joint concern'" which would ask, from both Christians professing Christ as Truth and from non-Christians rejecting Him, "the faith to seek truth in relation to the real problems of human life in community. Such 'structures of common concern and search' for truth at this level could put the whole matter of Christian and non-Christian relations into a new context and perspective."<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p. 116.

2. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 12.

3. Fleming, Structures for a Missionary Congregation, p. 104.

The 1964 Assembly statement did not deny the "absolute necessity of studying and understanding ... the classical formulations" of other religions and "the actual ways in which men hold their convictions and live their lives".<sup>1</sup> However, this certainly seems to have been overshadowed by the strong emphasis on "the ambiguity of religion" and dialogue through the secular.

The secular approach to inter-religious dialogue would be needed to help remove the ghetto mentality within the Asian churches and bring them into concrete contact with other religions and the challenges of modern East Asia. But it would also be easy for such dialogues to stop at the point where agreements could be reached without much difficulty -- for indeed, adherents of all religions had on the whole shown similar concern for the problems in the community or in the nations.<sup>2</sup> Dialogues beyond the level of solving human problems and building humane structures for the new Asian society would also be necessary. M.M. Thomas had said that there were different levels at which inter-faith dialogue could and should take place:

First, there is the dialogue on the significance and contribution of each faith for defining man and society in personal terms, and for building a new common social philosophy and culture which will realize and stabilize the new Asian societies. Second, there is the dialogue at the level of fundamental theological doctrines about the ultimate reality and human salvation, and the relation of God, man and the world to each other; and about the inner core of "revelation" ... of each faith, which finds expression in the doctrines of its faith. Thirdly, there is a dialogue at the level of the interiority of spiritual experiences of persons, that is, of the processes through which each person had encountered reality and come to commitment of faith, the inner vision which sustains men in faith, doubt or unbelief.<sup>3</sup>

At both the Hong Kong Consultation on Faith and Order of 1966 and the Seoul Conference on Church and Society of 1967, there certainly appeared

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 13.

2. Supra, pp. 37-41.

3. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, pp. 115-116.

a more positive and balanced understanding of religions. At Hong Kong, while the 1964 statement was reissued en bloc, in a new statement on "The Criteria of Confession" the Consultation stated: "The approach whereby an adherent of another religion is taken simply as a man in need, not one involved in a religious or cultural group, is inadequate. This attitude ignores his solidarity with his culture." It explained:

To be religious is not by itself necessarily a good thing. Commitment to a particular religion and satisfaction with it have often prevented the acceptance of the fuller light in Jesus Christ. This does not mean that the confession of the faith sees no value in the Asian religions which have shaped the cultures of vast sections of Asian people. While it is not possible to see uniform or fixed patterns of relationship between the gospel and other religions, we need to discern the types of relationship for a positive appraisal of the contributions of religions.<sup>1</sup>

The Consultation then spoke of those "aspects of religious truth and experience, and categories of thought, which have played the role of preparation for the understanding and acceptance of the gospel". These were then regarded as able "to enrich the interpretations of some of the basic dimensions of the Christian faith", and to serve as "exciting points of entry for the Gospel of Christ".<sup>2</sup>

At Seoul, the delegates spoke of religion as "undergirding society and culture". Even under the great impact of modernization, "there is a core content to which people belonging to that society remain committed through faith, even though religion ceases to have an immediate or urgent appeal; its presence continues to be real and is felt as such by youth. It therefore exercises a stabilizing influence, even when its traditional forms tend to be challenged."<sup>3</sup> The Conference then cited the emergence of new religious sects in Japan as examples and then declared, "Religion has continued to provide a rationale for the Asian's quest for selfhood,"

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, pp. 47-48.

2. Ibid., pp. 48-50.

3. Seoul 1967 Report, pp. 27-28.

-- and explained:

It [Religion] has given him criteria for the total self towards which he aspires, in contrast to his merely economic self, and it also provides clues to help him become an integrated human being and to establish a satisfactory relationship with the world of things, men and values. Men everywhere seek to find meaning and significance in life through some form of religious expression.<sup>1</sup>

The Conference did not propose to do away with the distinction between the sacred and the secular, but it wanted a unity of both as the "wholeness" of man's existence:

There is need to emphasize both the Christian responsibility for active involvement in society, and the mainsprings of faith and worship which stem from personal commitment to the Lordship of Christ. In other words, the task of the Church is to discover how in each situation, the significance of the wholeness of man's existence in the unity of the secular and the sacred emerges.<sup>2</sup>

Thus Seoul recognised not only the important role that could be played by religions in the new Asian societies but also the personal commitment to God in Christ as forming an essential part in the wholeness of man's existence. Such recognition was in line with the thinking of the Hong Kong Consultation of 1966. Seoul's understanding of man as an "integrated human being" finding his "true self", or the "wholeness" of his existence, in the unity of the sacred and the secular, was an echo of what had been said at Hong Kong -- that "to trust Christ and yield oneself to His personality is to be a real 'self'".<sup>3</sup> As will be described later, both the 1966 Kyoto Conference on Christians in Industry and Lay Training and the Seoul Conference laid great emphasis on human development in the whole process of the modernization of Asian societies. Their emphasis in this direction and the understanding of the Hong Kong Consultation on the New Man and New Humanity and the two directions of Christian confession were thus in fact converging on one central issue

---

1. Seoul 1967 Report, p. 28.

2. Ibid., p. 29.

3. Supra, p. 226.



in the quests of post-war East Asia — the truly human.

(iii) The need for inter-religious dialogues and study of religions in depth. The need for more actual inter-religious dialogues and study of religions in depth was becoming increasingly self-evident after the mid-1960s. The 1968 Assembly produced no serious study on other religions except a general statement on "Christian-Muslim Encounter", and it referred its member-churches to a study of an inter-faith dialogue issued by a WCC consultation held in 1967.<sup>1</sup> The EACC seems to have given the initiatives to the WCC and the study centres scattered in different parts of East Asia;<sup>2</sup> indeed, it was the WCC's initiatives for some new programmes on Inter-Faith Dialogue in the 1970s that forced the EACC to make some responses. The Working Committee, meeting in early 1969, reiterated the basic understanding that "our acceptance of our common humanity involves us in dialogue with our fellow men ... This ground for dialogue makes it therefore a concomitant of our humanity. Our common strivings for social justice and for peace urge us towards a fuller recognition of our togetherness."<sup>3</sup> A consultation convened at about the same time at Bombay by the Christian Institute for Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, and the Roman Catholic Institute of Indian Culture, Bombay, expressed very similar understandings.<sup>4</sup> Late in 1969 Murray Rogers, a Western missionary working in India, was appointed as a full-time staff

- 
1. Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 13-14. The WCC Consultation referred to was the one held at Kandy in February 1967. Its statement can be found in Study Encounter (Geneva: WCC), Vol. III, No. 2 (1967), pp. 51-56.
  2. For a list of study centres in East Asia, see Church's Witness in Relation to Religion and Society, International Affairs, Religious Liberty, papers for preparatory reading, East Asia Christian Conference Second Assembly, Bangkok, 1964 (Bangkok: EACC), pp. 19-32; or, Centres of Renewal, pp. 58-61.
  3. Minutes of the Working Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, Tjibulan, Indonesia, Jan. 22-24, 1969 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 2 (referred to henceforward as Tjibulan 1969 Minutes).
  4. Asia Focus, IV, No. 2 (April 1969), p. 60.



member of the EACC in charge of Inter-Faith Dialogue.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, Rogers left the post about a year later to take up an appointment in Jerusalem. Rogers was well aware of the needs of the EACC and its member-churches in this area of concern. There had been more talks about dialogues than actual dialogues. He said, "In recent years the insistence has been more and more on real dialogue and genuine experience rather than on unbridled speculation."<sup>2</sup>

In considering EACC's response to the WCC's programmes on Inter-Faith Dialogue in the 1970s, D.G. Moses commented that "it was high time for EACC as such to become involved in the discussion of the subject".<sup>3</sup> But this sense of urgency might have been even better conveyed if he had said that without waiting for WCC's initiatives, the EACC together with all the study centres and theological institutions in the region should have already launched a programme of actual inter-religious dialogues and study in depth of other religions. The EACC urgently needs to help itself and its member-churches to develop an approach which can lead to this kind of study at a profounder level, for precisely, "Christ has more of his truth to reveal to us," as was so rightly observed at the Kandy Consultation in 1965.<sup>4</sup> In the official statement of response to the WCC's initiatives issued by the EACC Secretariat for Inter-Faith Dialogue in 1970, the secular approach was very much in evidence; it stated:

This dialogue is largely a matter of human relations, of openness on our part towards others, their lives and sufferings. Such meeting in depth between men on all subjects of common concern

- 
1. Minutes of the East Asia Christian Conference Working Committee 1969 Special Sessions, Madras, India, December 3-4, 1969 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 8 (referred to henceforward as Madras 1969 Minutes).
  2. Minutes of the Continuation Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, Atami, Japan, July 24-27, 1970 (Bangkok: EACC), p. A16 (referred to henceforward as Atami 1970 Minutes).
  3. Ibid., p. 4.
  4. Supra, p. 222.

and responsibility (development, justice and peace included) is an integral part of inter-faith dialogue even when, as is often the case, it is not explicitly concerned with religious matters.<sup>1</sup>

As will be described later, this statement reflects the dominant concern for development in the world ecumenical movement from the mid-1960s. The inter-faith dialogue has now been widened to include men of other faiths and of no faith. However, whether or not such a secular approach would lead to serious study of religions in depth remains to be seen. The problem has become even more acute because there are today very few competent Asian Christian scholars in the area of world religions. This lack of Asian Christian scholars was already clearly seen by Charles Ranson nearly two decades ago and has since then shown no significant improvement.<sup>2</sup> The few Asians who helped initiate new approaches to study on religions and theology of mission in the 1950s, as mentioned by Hallencreutz in his book New Approaches to Men of Other Faiths, have all either passed away or reached their senior years.<sup>3</sup> The EACC Working Committee meeting held in late 1969 observed that there was only S. Kulandran who could be asked to write a book on the concept of transcendence in all religions. It decided that on his retirement he should be invited to conduct this special study.<sup>4</sup>

The EACC has not made much significant advance yet in its study of religions. However, it must be said that in its strong appeals for inter-religious dialogues and Christian participation with peoples of other faiths and no faith in the task of nation-building, the EACC has helped

---

1. Atami 1970 Minutes, pp. A23-A24. This also appears in IRM LIX, No. 236 (October 1970), pp. 427-429.

2. Supra, p. 60.

3. Hallencreutz, New Approaches to Men of Other Faiths, p. 15. Those who had passed away include, for example, Y. Chakkarai (1958), P. Chen-chiah (1959), P.D. Devanandan (1962), D.T. Niles (1970). It is important to note that all of them were of the Indian sub-continent, reflecting the fact that on the whole, study of theology in relation to local cultural heritage has attracted more interest there than in other parts of East Asia.

4. Madras 1969 Minutes, pp. 7-8.

remove gradually the suspicion of those Asian peoples who had doubts about the loyalty of Asian Christians to their new nations and regarded them as adherents of a foreign religion.<sup>1</sup> A Hindu Indian professor spoke at the end of the Nagpur Colloquium of 1960 and said:

Christianity is no longer a foreign religion for us, though it was, when English missionaries came and tried to convert a large number of our people. Now, however, we find that many people are becoming Christians, apparently from sincere conviction. Christianity has evidently come to stay. It has taken root ... and has become a religion of the soil. Therefore it is up to us as Hindus to appreciate the point of view of Christians.<sup>2</sup>

The secular approach has helped establish the right of the Christian communities in East Asia to speak in their nations and to participate concretely in the task of nation-building. This approach has been a necessary step towards what must be regarded as the inescapable task of studying other religions in depth.

The centrality of the "personal" and the "common humanity" of man had become the main concerns among the EACC and its member-churches in relation to the Asian peoples' search for the foundations of new Asian society and nationhood. On these concerns, Asian Christians and Asian peoples of other faiths and no faith could now begin to come together to discuss their common task in nation-building. But while signs of such communication, mutual understanding and joint participation in nation-building were increasing, at the same time the personal and the common humanity of man had also been losing ground in the region, particularly in the development of the political structures of the Asian states and in the relations between Asian nations. Asian Christians found themselves in great difficulty in discerning the meaning and the working of God in these developments. Their response was one of struggle for the preservation of the personal and the common humanity of man in these political structures and inter-Asian relations.

---

1. Supra, p. 38.

2. Devanandan and Carman, "A Colloquium on the Hindu and the Christian Views of Man," p. 20.

(c) In the struggles for the "personal" and "common humanity" in political structures and international relations

Stephen Neill rightly foresaw in 1948 that the European or American democratic system of government adopted by the Asian nations in the early years of their independence would have to go through changes in coming years. He said, "It would be a poor prospect for the world if we had to conclude that the last word in political wisdom had already been spoken by the west." He could not believe that there would be "no creative fire in Asia, by means of which old forms may be reshaped to meet new necessities".<sup>1</sup> In the course of ten years after this observation, European or American democracy was indeed either abandoned or modified in varying degrees in many Asian nations.

As already described in Section I, up to the end of the 1960s four main kinds of democratic political system had been developed and practised by different Asian nations, each claiming to be "reshaped to meet new necessities" of national integration and economic progress.<sup>2</sup> But the process towards this modification in many Asian nations had been achieved not so much by constitutional or democratic means as by military coups or through unilateral action by a political party or a few political leaders in power. Subsequently, virtual dictatorial or authoritarian rule by a particular political party or leader developed as in the People's Republic of China, Pakistan, Burma, Thailand, the two Vietnams and Koreas, and Indonesia. In all these "reshaped", so-called democratic systems of government, the people had been deprived in varying degrees of fundamental human rights, usually in the name of safeguarding national unity and economic progress.<sup>3</sup> Won Yong Kang sadly observed:

---

1. Neill, "The Asian Scene," p. 66.

2. Supra, pp. 41-42.

3. See supra, p. 40, n. 2 and p. 41(-42), n. 1; Thomas and Abel's Religion, State and Ideologies in East Asia contains a good account of some of these developments.

The year 1958 seems to have been a turning point in modern history. That year marked the retreat of democracy and the rise of military power ... With independence hardly a decade old, the elaborate framework of constitutional democracy was dismantled or was robbed of its content in much of South and South East Asia.<sup>1</sup>

M.M. Thomas too was greatly disappointed by this development. His John R. Mott Lecture to the 1964 Assembly was centred on the Christian concern for the personal and for common humanity in Asian societies and nations. He was afraid that the idea of the personal which had been discovered in the early period of the Asian peoples' struggle for freedom and independence might cease to grow in the context of such development. He therefore strongly stressed the Asian Christian responsibility "to penetrate politics, economics and culture with the idea and reality of the personal. Otherwise, the revolution we are passing through in Asia will only strengthen impersonal and authoritarian structures and values at all levels."<sup>2</sup> But the Asian Christian "penetration" of the "frontiers" of political structures and international affairs has proved to be most difficult and agonising, for Asian Christians have faced the dilemma of being responsible towards the unity and progress of their nation as well as towards the truth of Christ. In this dilemma, many different positions have been adopted by them in relation to the understanding of the important political and international issues of the region, and the EACC itself has reflected this dilemma and these divisions very clearly.

At Kuala Lumpur, there was discussion of the idea and form of democracy and the function of the state. The Assembly asked: "Is parliamentary government the best method in all circumstances for preserving those Christian values enshrined in the word 'democracy'?" And is not the development of more authoritarian systems in certain circumstances a more

---

1. Won Yang Kang, "The Church and Nation-Building: An Appraisal," South East Asia Journal of Theology 6, No. 2 (October 1964), p. 50.

2. M.M. Thomas, "Understanding the Tides of History," pp. 25-26.



effective means of safeguarding them?"<sup>1</sup> The answers given revealed the dilemma, for, on the one hand, they held:

Ultimately a system of government will be tested by its capacity to develop a sense of community among its people, achieve their deliverance from economic bondage and preserve the basic liberties of individuals and associations. It is our conviction that this balance of objectives will be best preserved only by a democratic political system.<sup>2</sup>

And in facing the question of priorities they stated:

As Christians our concern is not to set precise priorities but to insist that all three purposes of the state [as mentioned in the above quotation] must be preserved in the best possible balance. The pursuit of any of them at the expense of the others will result ultimately in the denial of all.<sup>3</sup>

But, on the other hand, it was also clear that they were on the side of national unity and economic progress, for they urged:

We must stress the positive functions of government in the re-ordering of economic life, and the duty of Christians and other citizens to accept the authority of the state and a great measure of state-imposed discipline, as a means to social progress.<sup>4</sup>

and added:

In a situation where narrow and exclusive loyalties clash, the need for expanding loyalties and overriding purposes for the sake of national goals, cannot be overstressed.<sup>5</sup>

However, in conclusion, they held, "Static political structures cannot answer the needs of an Asia in revolution;" and they asked for opportunities for the people to share in the power and responsibilities of government, for "where these are lacking people tend to resort to direct action against the government."<sup>6</sup>

The enlarged Continuation Committee meeting at Bangalore in 1961 faced the same dilemma. In noting the great disparity of political

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 61.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 62.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 63.

6. Ibid., pp. 62, 63.



systems in the region, the Committee's first understanding was more a defence of the fact than a criticism, for it began by arguing:

Abstract judgements of these different systems serve no useful purpose. Each has grown out of the political forces and social needs of a particular situation. Moreover, they all have one common aim: to create an independent nation-state serving the urgent social and economic needs of their peoples.<sup>1</sup>

But following this, the Committee turned around and stated that "while each nation should be free to develop the patterns of political life which suit its genius best and correspond to its stage of political maturity, this freedom cannot be absolute".<sup>2</sup> The duty of Christians was to set before the nation certain goals in the latter's search for political structures for the state. These goals, the Committee recommended, should include the following:

1. The State must be based in some measure on the consent of the people. The means of people's participation in government and of the people's capacity to use the available means may have serious limitations in Asian countries today; but it is imperative that both should be further developed.

2. The State must express in its own structure its recognition that man has ends and loyalties beyond the State ....

3. The power of the State should never be absolute and must be limited by political means, legal processes or custom. The urgent problems of national development and political unity in all areas of Asia demand a strong and decisive central government. The danger is that this will pull these nations in the direction of authoritarian, and even totalitarian, rule ....

4. The State in Asia today has the task of integrating the traditional communal groups into a new composite national community. But it should be done without doing violence to the legitimate individuality of traditional groups ....<sup>3</sup>

The many qualifying considerations put into these goals show clearly the difficulties that the Committee had to overcome in order to reach a judgement which would do justice both to the necessity for unity and progress in Asian nations and to the Christian belief in the value of the personal. "The development of the structures of responsible political

---

1. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 21.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp. 21-23.

life in Asia," it argued, "is a long-term job," and it asked for understanding from the people of other parts of the world who might be critical of political developments in the region.<sup>1</sup> At the WCC New Delhi Assembly, the Asian Christians' plea was heard. The WCC Assembly acknowledged the difficulties facing the Asian nations, but it also warned:

No present difficulties justify Christians or churches in acquiescing in either old or new forms of tyranny. Where emergencies may seem to call for temporary authoritarian regimes, let all who support them be warned that power corrupts, and that those who assume it will usually try to keep it.<sup>2</sup>

By about 1965, the fears expressed at New Delhi had indeed come true in the development of some undeniably corrupt and authoritarian political structures and in the increase of inter-Asian tensions in the region. The different ideological and political systems which had been regarded earlier by many Asian Christians as having the common purpose of building national unity and promoting economic progress, had come into conflict with each other. The betrayal of the personal and the common humanity of man in these developments was quite contrary to what Asian Christians had once optimistically hoped for. As mentioned earlier, for example, both Thomas and Won expressed great disappointment about these developments.

Asian Christians were facing a real dilemma, and this was reflected in the 1964 Assembly where only studies on a number of current cultural political and international issues were recommended but no judgement or pronouncement was made on any specific political or international crisis in the region.<sup>3</sup> Its statements on "The Church's Involvement in Contemporary Asian Societies" and "Asian Churches and International Affairs" were in fact a combination and rearrangement of parts of the statements issued at Kuala Lumpur and Bangalore.<sup>4</sup> In this respect, therefore, the EACC

---

1. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 23.

2. Visser't Hooft (ed.), The New Delhi Report, p. 101.

3. Bangkok 1964 Report, pp. 31-38.

4. Cf. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 60-74, 104-105; Bangalore 1961 Minutes, pp. 10-25; Bangkok 1964 Statements, pp. 17-43.

seems to have gained few new insights in its discernment of the developing situation. A collection of essays on "Religion, State and Ideologies in East Asia" was published by the EACC in 1965, but these were more a valuable description of the existing political situations than a breakthrough in Christian understanding and judgement.<sup>1</sup> In reissuing the Kuala Lumpur Statement, the 1964 Assembly was in effect still in agreement with what had been said in 1959, namely that "the Asian churches are only at the beginning of their conversation with each other and little progress has been made to reach a common understanding of what God is doing in the life of the nations in Asia today."<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, in no other area had the EACC and its member-churches found it more difficult to discern the ways of the working of God than in the area of international affairs.

(i) Asian Christian divisions in international affairs. Thomas noted in his survey of ecumenical social thought prepared for the participants of the Kuala Lumpur Assembly that, apart from the two short statements made on Korea and on the Indo-Pakistan dispute at Lucknow in 1952, he could find no other Asian Christian discussions on inter-Asian problems on which Asian churches should have expressed concern.<sup>3</sup> This situation changed completely after the EACC came into being. But discussions of this nature in the EACC had also often proved to be most difficult and frustrating; indeed, these difficulties revealed themselves at the very beginning of the process. At Kuala Lumpur, Asian Christian leaders were united in a commitment to the cause of world community and peace and in their appeal against the use and testing of nuclear weapons. But in

---

1. This refers to the book edited by Thomas and Abel. Supra, p.265, n. 3.

2. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 49; Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 64.

3. The Witness of the Churches in the Midst of Social Change, p. 105; cf. also supra, p. 66.

other "crucial international problems" they "could not come to any common mind due to serious divisions of opinion". The Assembly reported:

The divisions of opinion among us exactly, or almost exactly, reflect the divisions of opinion at the state level. Christians in all countries tend to identify themselves uncritically with the official view of their government. The result is an inability to view the issues of international life and relations afresh and without prior commitment.<sup>1</sup>

The Continuation Committee at Bangalore faced the same difficulty. In a report on "The Asian Churches and International Affairs" prepared by a special commission, there was a general agreement on the necessity of easing tensions among various Asian nations, and the policy of non-alignment received, at last, some criticism. There were "dangers" in this policy, it was said, such as the refusal "to recognize fundamental differences", the tendency "to encourage a false sense of moral superiority", and the "vacillation and non-commitment on certain crucial international issues where human rights were involved".<sup>2</sup> However, at Bangalore it was again in the more important international issues that divisions of opinion appeared. For example on military pacts and alliances, opinions were divided as to whether such pacts could actually check the onrush of communism into East Asia and ensure the security of small nations or whether they would actually increase insecurity and represent the re-entry of the Western powers into the region, provoking the reactions of the communist powers.<sup>3</sup>

On the question of China's admission into the United Nations, the meeting broke out into open division. While Chinese communism had given "the impression of having become expansionist", the Commission said, "we recognize the importance of keeping open the channels of communication

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 64.

2. Supra, pp. 77-78; Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 12.

3. Ibid., p. 19.

between ... China and the rest of the world." The Commission therefore supported China's admission into the United Nations.<sup>1</sup> However, the Continuation Committee declared that it desired to place on record that on this recommendation there was "a sharp difference of opinion in the Committee". The Korean delegation dissociated itself from this recommendation and withdrew "from the meeting when the report of this Commission was received" and requested "that this action be recorded". The Committee further stated that this report could be considered only as a study document and not as the official view of the EACC or its member-churches.<sup>2</sup> Apparently, to avoid any similar unpleasant incident, this specific recommendation was not raised in either the 1964 or the 1968 Assembly. Asian Christians have remained divided on the question of China; the division can still be clearly seen in the statement of the 1968 Assembly:

At this Assembly (1968) we as an East Asia Christian Conference are not in a position to make any comprehensive and decisive statement on the People's Republic of China, as this issue affects other Asian nations.<sup>3</sup>

The Assembly did recommend, however, as it had done in 1964, that studies on various issues connected with China be started and that "this whole issue" should be "under active consideration by the EACC during the ensuing quadrennium".<sup>4</sup> However, the issue was considered so sensitive that only "unpublicised study by small groups" was recommended, reported the Working Committee in 1969.<sup>5</sup> Up to 1970, no report on any significant progress of this study had appeared.

Asian Christians supported the Indian government's proposal that 1965 be designated as an "International Year of Co-operation" marking the

---

1. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 17.

2. Ibid., p. 10.

3. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 8.

4. Ibid.

5. Tjibulan 1969 Minutes, p. 8.



twentieth anniversary of the United Nations.<sup>1</sup> But 1965 turned out to be the most "un-cooperative" year between some Asian nations. In the midst of inter-Asian tensions such as the conflict between India and Pakistan, the "Confrontation" between Malaysia and Indonesia, the territorial dispute between Malaysia and the Philippines, the tensions between Malaysia and Singapore, and the beginning of the escalation of the Vietnam War — and many of these conflicts were tainted with religious and racial overtones — Asian Christians struggled to maintain their bonds of fellowship.<sup>2</sup> The EACC appealed to the heads of both Indian and Pakistan governments and the NCCs in the two countries to rise above ideological positions to find a peaceful solution. In the available records of the EACC, it seems that there was no reply or statement from the two NCCs to the EACC.<sup>3</sup> Consultations on Malaysian/Indonesian problems were held behind the scenes, but the reports could not be made public, and the continuing contacts between Christian leaders of the countries concerned likewise remained unpublicised.<sup>4</sup> These tensions appear to have affected also some sections of Asian Christian youth. At the Asian Christian Youth Assembly held at Manila early in 1965, they could not produce an agreed statement on peace until near the very end of the Assembly.<sup>5</sup>

Asian Christians had been divided also in their understanding of the nature of the Vietnam War despite many consultations.<sup>6</sup> As late as

- 
1. Church's Witness in Relation to Religion and Society ..., preparatory papers for 1964 Assembly, p. 77.
  2. See Appendix H.
  3. Kandy 1965 Minutes, pp. 14, 46-47.
  4. Ibid., pp. 13, 68.
  5. Douglas A. Rose, Seed of the Lotus: A Diary of the Asian Christian Youth Assembly of 1964-1965 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 61.
  6. For these efforts, see Kandy 1965 Minutes, pp. 11-12, 39-42, Church and Society (December 1965), pp. 86-87, Hong Kong 1966 Minutes, pp. 12-13/....



1970, the Continuation Committee meeting in Japan noted that Asian Christians still held different opinions about the nature of and solutions to the Vietnam solution. A special group of committee members who had been asked by the Committee to look into the problem failed to reach agreement, and had to report back to the Committee that "members [of this group] had no one opinion on the matter. It clearly made evident that there were different views of Asian churches in this regard."<sup>1</sup> It is true that Asian churches had repeatedly demanded that "the fighting be de-escalated, that a cease-fire be arranged, and that negotiations be carried on for a peaceful settlement".<sup>2</sup> But, not unlike the political forces involved in the conflict, there was "the difficulty of agreeing even among churches on the 'how' of peace".<sup>3</sup>

(ii) The continuing task of discernment and costly ministry of reconciliation. These divisions of opinion in political and international affairs and the inability of the EACC to find satisfactory solutions were recognised by some EACC leaders. At the Continuation Committee meeting in Hong Kong 1966, these presented a statement in which a new approach by the EACC on political and international affairs was urged. They explained:

Our problem is not so much to devise proposals for the solution of various crises ... The difficult and necessary task is to state clearly how we get from the biblical revelation of God in Christ to the specific proposal which we are led to formulate. When we fail to give the Christian theological reason for the actions which we advocate, we lose the distinctiveness of our biblical witness and tend to become minor diplomats.<sup>4</sup>

---

12-13, and Seoul 1967 Report, pp. 40-41 ("This Conference is divided as to which political forces in Vietnam represent national self-determination, social justice, and Asian security"- p. 41), and Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 7-8.

1. Atami 1970 Minutes, p. 19.
2. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 7.
3. Atami 1970 Minutes, p. 19.
4. Hong Kong 1966 Minutes, p. 76. The leaders were: D.T. Niles, U Kyaw Than, T.B. Simatupang, Wichaidist, Korula Jacob, and Dr. Bilheimer of the WCC (p. 12).

They therefore saw the necessity of both study and action. There must be "solid collaboration between people of theological competence and those who have competence in the field of international affairs". The Christian approach must be "both biblical and political at the same time".<sup>1</sup>

It can be observed that at the Consultation on Faith and Order in Hong Kong, there was such an attempt to bring theological considerations to bear on Christian judgements and actions in political and international affairs. The Consultation accepted the usual arguments for the development of different authoritarian political structures in East Asia,<sup>2</sup> but it warned:

Because of human sin, political power is readily open to perversion and misuse. Any great concentration of power in any man or institution, political or otherwise, is always susceptible to demonic temptation and abuse ... [Therefore] Christians must work for the continual renewal of these structures and prevent them from absolutising themselves ... [And] the Church must confess both on its own behalf and on behalf of the nation all the sins and failures in political life.<sup>3</sup>

But the Consultation also held that the church was not of the nation.

It explained:

The Lord who calls the Church out of the world, at the same time sends it into the world to be in it and for it ... The gospel not only makes the Church distinguishable within the human community; the gospel also creates a new identifiability with the human community. In baptism, the Christian not only dies to this world, but he also rises in Christ to be in the world anew through Him.<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, the very existence of the Christian community in each nation was said to be "one of the signs that Christ is at work in its midst.

It is at the same time a constant reminder that the state cannot claim absolute allegiance for this is due only to God."<sup>5</sup> "The Church has the

---

1. Hong Kong 1966 Minutes, p. 76.

2. Faith and Order 1966, p. 76.

3. Ibid., pp. 77-78.

4. Ibid., p. 75.

5. Ibid., p. 77.

responsibility to function as the conscience of the nation."<sup>1</sup>

Hong Kong was insistent that "political renewal in the human community must begin in the house of God". It urged:

The political life of the people of God must be a model of political activity in the human community ... Would it not be ironic if the nations succeeded in achieving full national unity and regional stability, while the churches, with far more compelling motivation for unity, remained still in their divisions?<sup>2</sup>

The Consultation reaffirmed the belief which had been declared in many other EACC occasions that "the Churches in Asia must be agents of reconciliation in the problems between the Asian nations".<sup>3</sup>

Thus, Hong Kong attempted to develop an approach to political and international affairs which could transcend national and ideological barriers. Its understanding of the prophetic ministry of the Church was not unlike that of Lucknow 1952 where the churches were called to be the "spiritual reality" of a third force in the world. It was thought then that the task of the churches was to provide its members with "the basis for spiritual freedom against ideological politics and for making prophetic judgements. That is to say, that Christians have in the Church a basis for making decisions on any issue in terms of principle without antecedent commitment to either party in conflict."<sup>4</sup>

However, it does not seem that this theological-political approach was followed further in either the Seoul Consultation or the 1968 Assembly. Both gatherings recognised that changes of political and social structures were absolutely necessary if the Asian nations were to advance in their modernising process.<sup>5</sup> In this regard, Asian Christians had now become

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, p. 81.

2. Ibid., p. 79.

3. Ibid., p. 80; see also Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 65, Bangkok 1964 Report, p. 40, and Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 1.

4. Supra, p. 66.

5. See Seoul 1967 Report, pp. 37-45, and Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 1-5.

impatient with the corrupt, inept and enclosed authoritarian political structures that prevailed in a number of nations. The 1968 Assembly held:

Social values, attitudes and the personality as well as the social structures have to be fundamentally changed if a positive and spontaneous response to modernising efforts is desired ....

Revolutionary movements therefore are an inherent part of the modernisation process, without the former it is unrealistic, at least in traditional societies, to think of the latter.<sup>1</sup>

But the question centred on the means to achieve these changes. For example, the Seoul Consultation held that "the Church must also stand ready to endorse the use of civil disobedience in cases where the law is manifestly unjust".<sup>2</sup> The 1968 Assembly agreed that this was one of the views held by some Christians and it expanded Seoul's statements as follows:

The Church must stand ready to exert its influence in order to realise these objectives and also on occasion to endorse the responsible use of civil disobedience in cases where the law and the distribution of power are manifestly unjust.<sup>3</sup>

Undeniably, the 1968 statement was a more careful one. However, it does not seem that either Seoul or the 1968 Assembly gave a clear "theological reason" founded on "biblical revelation" to support this specific proposal for civil disobedience. The matter of civil disobedience with its implications of violence and the problems of subsequent control was not even explained in as much detail as it had been at the WCC World Conference on Church and Society held in Geneva in 1966.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, some Asian Christians might have rejected the idea outright since many Asian societies and nations had long been torn apart by disorder, instability and violence. As will be shown later, there were Asian Christians who regarded unity and

---

1. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 4.

2. Seoul 1967 Report, p. 40.

3. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 1.

4. World Conference on Church and Society: The Official Report, Geneva, July 12-26, 1966 (Geneva: WCC, 1967), pp. 115-117, 143-150.

stability as vital to the much-needed success of development programmes in the region. They preferred peaceful means, therefore, to effect changes in social and political structures. To such Christians this specific proposal was unconvincing and seemed to encourage Asian Christians to become "minor revolutionaries". The "theological-political" or "spiritual third force" approach recommended to the Continuation Committee meeting in 1966 was not followed, and indeed at Seoul the approach to political and international affairs was still one of "finding consensus" from existing differences of opinion and understanding among Asian Christians.<sup>1</sup>

However, the 1968 Assembly did come to realise the importance of study as well as action. Separate study programmes on politics and international affairs were to be launched in the eastern and western regions of the EACC and a special consultant was appointed whose chief function was to maintain close liaison between the NCCs and the EACC.<sup>2</sup> D.T. Niles reported at the 1968 Assembly: "In the realm of International Affairs, the record for the last ten years is simply one of finding our feet."<sup>3</sup> Whether this new emphasis on both study and action will eventually improve this situation, as it does not seem to have done in the case of Vietnam and China, still remains to be seen. If the bonds of fellowship have continued until now among Asian Christians despite their differences in politics and inter-Asian affairs, this has been possible "because of the constraining love and power His Holy Spirit imparts to the churches".<sup>4</sup> If 1965 was a year of conflicts in East Asia, it was also in this year that Asian Christian Service was launched by the EACC as a

---

1. Seoul 1967 Report, p. 37.

2. Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 58-59.

3. Niles, Ideas and Services, p. 20.

4. Said by Kyaw Than: Kandy 1965 Minutes, p. 61.



relief service in South Vietnam.<sup>1</sup> This Asian "Christian Presence" in the midst of an international conflict has now grown into a large rehabilitation and development programme not only in South Vietnam but also in Cambodia and Laos with about forty staff members recruited from different churches and nations in East Asia. The budget of this programme has been heavily subsidized by the WCC and the churches in the West; nevertheless, nearly thirty per cent of it has been coming from Asian churches.<sup>2</sup>

Asian Christians have repeatedly declared that they and their churches are called to be agents of reconciliation in East Asia. And their experiences in this ministry have been most agonising and soul-searching. The ministry of reconciliation, Takenaka said, is "a ministry of struggle and conflict". Christian life in the world "is always carried on with a costly love which is the life of agony, wrestling together with Christ for the restoration of humanity".<sup>3</sup> An Asian church which was obedient to God's call to this ministry in East Asia could not have hoped to escape this agony. The ministry of reconciliation must be more than discussions and statements; it must also be actual service and ministry. The service rendered by Asian Christian Service for the restoration of the personal dignity and the common humanity of man in the actual war situations in Indo-China might eventually also help Asian Christians to come to a deeper and more unified understanding of

---

1. Kandy 1965 Minutes, pp. 5-6, 31-38.

2. For more details of the ACS see the following:- Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 39-40; Jill Perkins, Fragments of War, Asian Christian Service at work in Vietnam and Laos (published by Chinese Christian Literature Council, Hong Kong, for Fellowship of the Least Coin, Asian Church Women's Conference, April 1970); Tjibulan 1969 Minutes, pp. 20-16; Atami 1970 Minutes, pp. A33-A34. Asian Christian Service Programme Report — January to September 1970 (Vietiane, Laos: ACS), pp. 31-34, contains a list of overseas and local staff of ACS in three areas of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. ACS reports are available from Samuel M. Isaac, Director of ACS, Vietiane.

3. Takenaka, "The First Fruits in Asia," in Christ's Ministry — And Ours (John R. Mott Lectures 1961), pp. 9, 16.



what it meant to respond to Christ's call in relation to politics and international affairs.

But the betrayal of the personal and the common humanity of man in the political structures, in the many conflicts, tensions and wars between races, religious communities and nations during the years from 1958 to 1968 had also demonstrated to the Asian Christians the disruptive power of human sin and demonic forces. The Hong Kong Consultation on Faith and Order rightly said that "the creativity of man" could be used "either for his well-being or for his destruction". "In the background of all human disintegration lurks human sin." Christians must stress "the dignity and the sinfulness of man at the same time" in order to overcome any naive attitude in politics which might overlook the combination of power and self-interest being always present in political actions.<sup>1</sup> Hong Kong rightly discerned:

To confess Christ's presence in the political life implies the duty of discerning where Christ is challenging His Church through political events to a deeper understanding of the faith. The revolutionary modernising process now going on in Asia, with its strong hopes for a new world and a new humanity, along with its perversions and excesses, must stimulate the churches in Asia to understand more clearly the Christ who has overcome sin and death and who is making all things new.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. In Relation to Development

If Christians and peoples of East Asia, then, accepted the necessity of authoritarian systems of government, it was mainly for the sake of national unity and economic progress. Asian Christians recognised that rapid economic progress was urgent if the task of nation-building was to be successful. With political independence achieved, East Asia was facing

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, pp. 68-69, 80.

2. Ibid., p. 74.

a generation of rising expectations as well as discontent. M.M. Thomas said that poverty in East Asia had existed "from time immemorial", but the people were "now discontented and know that this is no divinely ordained fate".<sup>1</sup> There was also the conviction that "peace cannot be maintained in a world of want, hunger and uncertainty".<sup>2</sup> Won Yong Kang observed:

Political freedom without economic opportunity is an anachronism which people today will no longer accept. Their expectations include a better life involving this world's goods, and they are unwilling to tolerate economic exploitation or a continuation of the grinding poverty their forebears suffered.<sup>3</sup>

The Kuala Lumpur Assembly recognised that "harsh poverty" had continued to be "one of the most disturbing facts of most countries of Asia": "The need of the impoverished masses in Asia reaches to heaven, crying for an emancipation." To meet the needs of the time of rising expectations, Asian countries were said to be engaged in "a struggle to realize a vast programme of social and economic development".<sup>4</sup> The Continuation Committee meeting at Bangalore reiterated: "One test of Asian political development is its capacity to advance economic and social development, just as the latter is an essential foundation for political advance. POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE WITHOUT ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE IS INCOMPLETE."<sup>5</sup>

Asian Christians' concern for economic development until about the first half of the 1960s was based on an often repeated understanding that economic gains would give meaning to the "abundant life" promised by Christ (John 10:10), although material goods should not be regarded as ends of life. Thus, Kuala Lumpur Assembly held, "We are concerned with that

- 
1. Thomas, "Some notes on a Christian interpretation of nationalism in Asia," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 43-44.
  2. The Social Goals of New Asia: Siantar Conference 1957, p. 32.
  3. Won Yong Kang, "Christian Response to the Asian Revolution," Student World: Our Calling to Service in Asia Today, a quarterly review, Vol. LV, No. 3, (Third Quarter, 1962; published in Geneva by the World Student Christian Federation), p. 288.
  4. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 65.
  5. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 23.

struggle for economic development because it is, in several important respects, an expression of man's struggle to give meaning to his life." It denied that such a concern was materialistic, and argued:

Man does not live by bread alone. But it must be affirmed strongly by the churches that economic welfare is a necessary means of the good life. It becomes materialistic when it is conceived as the end of life. Looked at in the right perspective the search for material security and economic justice which is a basic drive in Asia may become a sign of the abundant life which Christ has promised.<sup>1</sup>

Indian Christian leaders in their appeal to their fellow-Christians to participate in economic development used the same argument: "A higher standard of living should be welcomed as a means to the good life God has ordained for man."<sup>2</sup> The Korean Christians argued in the same way that "economic development itself is not man's goal but one of the means of fulfilling true life as given by God in Jesus Christ".<sup>3</sup> Individual EACC leaders had expressed similar understanding. Thomas said: "Personal freedom and social justice and higher standard of living and sense of national identity do not guarantee personal fulfilment in a responsible society, but they are certainly necessary conditions."<sup>4</sup> The hopes for a better world seen in the process of modernisation, Simatupang similarly held, were "an expression of what God has willed, what God has ordained, what God has planned for the future of man", but Christians would also have to remind society that "we are still living in a fallen world and that the perfect society is not within the reach of man".<sup>5</sup>

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 65.

2. Devanandan and Thomas (eds.), Christian Participation in Nation-Building, p. 113.

3. New Forms of Christian Service and Participation in Korea: Onyang Consultation 1962, p. 37.

4. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p. 29.

5. T.B. Simatupang, "Christian Responsibility in the Revolutionary Process," in Robert M. Fukada (ed.), God's People in Asian Industrial Society: The Report of the East Asia Christian Conference on Christians in Industry and Lay Training, Kyoto, Japan, May 18-25, 1966 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 109 (referred to henceforward as Kyoto 1966 Report).

(a) The spreading concern for social and economic development

The EACC's involvement in social and economic development began when it took over responsibility from the ACEM for the sponsoring of the First Asian Conference on Industrial Evangelism at Manila in June 1958 and the continuation of the concern for industrial evangelism which came out from that conference.<sup>1</sup> At Manila, as in the Siantar Conference held more than a year earlier, the dehumanising effects of rapid urbanisation and industrialisation were well recognised. The Conference urged Asian churches

... to intensify [their] prophetic ministry by denouncing the wrong wherever it is found and by declaring judgement on all social issues; ... to create and support a strong, unshakable, honest and righteous body of public opinion aimed at social justice ... [and] uphold the dignity of human personality in a social system which is tending to reduce human personality to a mere tool of production without caring for his spiritual, social or physical welfare.<sup>2</sup>

However, the Conference also recognised that the bulk of the Asian population still remained in villages and rural areas. It therefore urged the churches "never [to] mitigate the importance of rural work".<sup>3</sup> Following the Siantar Conference's concern for independence and inter-dependence of nations in economic development and noting that to a large extent the economic pattern of the newly independent Asian nations was dependent upon the economic structure of the west, the Conference declared: "We must develop our study and concern as to what should be a new relationship in this new era of economic relationship between Asia and the West."<sup>4</sup> However, it was at Kuala Lumpur that an attempt was made to deal with the whole range of issues in social and economic development. The Assembly

---

1. U Kyaw Than (ed.), Toward Kuala Lumpur 1959, Chap. 3, pp. 4-5.

2. To Understand Christian Responsibility in the Asian Industrial Awakening: The First Asian Conference on Industrial Evangelism, 1958, p. 14.

3. Ibid., p. 15.

4. Ibid., p. 11.

held:

The basic aim of the development programmes of the Asian countries should be to bring about social justice, to provide equal opportunity for a free development of the individual person, to raise the standard of living and to secure the general welfare.

But the "immediate aims" were clear:

... increased productivity of labour, especially in agriculture, expansion of industrial output, and increased trade between the Asian countries and with the rest of the world. And all this must be accompanied by a determined will to distribute equitably the new wealth created by this economic development.<sup>1</sup>

The Assembly recognised that great efforts would be required from each Asian government and its people before these aims could be achieved. It accepted the practical necessity, at this initial stage of economic development, for government initiative and control in the planning and implementation of social and industrial programmes, and it also saw the important role that could be played at the same time by private enterprise and the cooperative movement.<sup>2</sup> Land reform programmes, the Assembly noted, had not been "producing results adequate to make the countries self-sufficient in food and to overcome rural unemployment ... [Yet] the problem of increasing agricultural production is of the greatest importance because of the increasing population."<sup>3</sup> It urged Christians to be aware of the problems and struggles for social and economic justice among the workers, trade unionists and peasants. Their indifference to these struggles was "one of the fundamental weaknesses of the churches in Asia today".<sup>4</sup> The Assembly also observed that one obstacle to economic progress in many Asian countries had been "the restriction put upon women thus immobilizing a large segment of national human resources". The improved status of women, it held, must be a vital concern of the Asian

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 65-66.

2. Ibid., pp. 66-67.

3. Ibid., p. 67.

4. Ibid., p. 69.



churches.<sup>1</sup> The Assembly urged the churches to be involved in the process of community development in order to be able to contribute their insights on, for example, "the dignity of work, the concern for social justice and individual freedom, the protection of women's rights". It observed that some negative and fatalistic Asian religious attitudes towards life and work had become hindrances to the development of industrial society.<sup>2</sup> There was a more concrete concern at Kuala Lumpur than at Lucknow or Siantar about the problem of rapid population growth in relation to economic growth. The Assembly believed the churches needed to give positive guidance to their members on the matter of family planning and to initiate discussion at all levels. "The limitation of the size of the family," it held, "is a decision to be reached responsibly by husband and wife ... Considerations of family welfare must be regarded as supreme. To belittle the family in the interest of general population control is by Christian standards a sin." Apparently, the Assembly had no objection to the programme of public education on birth control and the use of contraceptives, for it is on record as hoping that there would be "increased acceptance" of this programme.<sup>3</sup> However, at Kuala Lumpur, Asian Christian leaders seemed to be still optimistic that rapid industrialisation would be able to solve the problem of providing jobs for a rapidly growing population: "Industrialization of nations can often so increase their resources that a rise of population may occur without economic and social strain."<sup>4</sup> But as already described in Section I, industrialisation in East Asia faced many complex problems and turned out to be unreliable as a solution to the problem of unemployment and

---

1. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 69.

2. Ibid., p. 68.

3. Ibid., p. 70.

4. Ibid.



rising population.<sup>1</sup> However, at Kuala Lumpur Asian churches were urged to give their support to efforts of industrialisation and also to the moves for international control of raw material supplies and freer access to world markets. The Assembly reiterated Siantar's and Manila's call for establishing a new pattern of economic relationship between Asian countries and the West.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the issues raised at Kuala Lumpur were followed up in certain national and regional conferences sponsored by the EACC and in the latter's Continuation Committee. The Consultations on New Forms of Christian Service, as mentioned in the previous chapter, were held on the recommendation of the Kuala Lumpur Assembly for the purpose of finding new ways of Christian service in the light of current efforts for development in the Asian countries. One strong appeal which came out of these consultations was for concrete Christian participation in the struggle for social and economic justice.<sup>3</sup> The question of new patterns of international economic relationship in relation to foreign aid to Asian countries was discussed in more detail at the Continuation Committee meeting at Bangalore. The Committee urged the donor countries to rise above political and ideological self-interest and to understand the basic social and economic goals and patterns of development suited to the receiving countries. It saw the necessity of radical changes in the agrarian structure of Asian society if foreign aid and technical assistance from the West were to be used to their fullest benefit. It urged that aid be made available to small industries and local projects of economic development operated by village groups. To follow up Kuala Lumpur's concern for rapid population growth, it then recommended that

---

1. Supra, pp. 23-28.

2. Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, pp. 71, 77-78.

3. Ibid., p. 73; supra, pp. 178-185.

a consultation on family planning be held by the EACC.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, one important aspect of the work of the EACC which does not seem to have gained the prominence and publicity that it deserved was that of the Committee on Co-operation between Men and Women in Home, Church and Society. Working often in close association with the Asian Christian Women's Conference, this Committee organised a number of consultations at regular intervals on some important issues of the relationship of men and women in East Asia. Rapid population growth and family planning were the main theme of the consultation held at Bangkok just prior to the 1964 Assembly. The Consultation approached the problem of population by way of the theme of responsible parenthood, explaining that its primary concern was not about quantity or material comforts, but "for the QUALITY of family life".<sup>2</sup> It was this, it argued, that had involved Christians in the concern for various social, economic and related issues in society. Jacob S. Quiambao of the Philippines, the Secretary of the Committee on Co-operation between Men and Women, held that "in the final analysis, the solution of the problem of population control goes back to the family, by way of responsible parenthood".<sup>3</sup> There was a great need, he felt, for the Asian churches to make the people aware of the population situation so that they could make their own choices regarding birth control.<sup>4</sup> The recommendation from the Consultation for a "Responsible Parenthood Training Corps" who would conduct seminars and training courses at the invitation of the churches received support from the Asian churches, and such courses on marriage and family counselling

---

1. Bangalore 1961 Minutes, p. 24.

2. The Asian Churches and Responsible Parenthood, EACC Consultation, Bangkok, Thailand, February 21-25, 1964 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 2.

3. Jacob S. Quiambao, The Asian Family in a Changing Society (Bangkok: EACC, 1965), p. 79.

4. Jacob S. Quiambao, "Developing a Christian Viewpoint of Responsible Parenthood," in The Asian Churches and Responsible Parenthood, p. 65.

have been held regularly for the Asian churches in different parts of East Asia.<sup>1</sup>

The statements on social and economic development issued by the Kuala Lumpur Assembly and the Continuation Committee meeting at Bangalore were reissued in a re-arranged form by the 1964 Assembly. The latter does not appear to have had a deliberation on social and economic development such as the one that had taken place in the 1959 Assembly. However, this matter did in fact receive close attention when the Assembly considered and approved the various programmes and consultations planned by the different EACC committees; for, with this assembly's strong emphasis on training and witness of the laity and its decision to hold a consultation in 1966 on the theme of confessing the faith in Asia today, various issues raised at Kuala Lumpur in connection with social and economic development would in the event be given even more specific attention in these national and regional programmes.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, considering those sponsored by the EACC alone, there has been a great number of consultations and conferences held during the years 1959-1968 on social, economic and other related themes.<sup>3</sup> Whatever understandings and more detailed

- 
1. For further details about the work of this committee, see Bangkok 1964 Report, pp. 44-46, Bangkok 1968 Report, pp. 17-18, and Tokyo 1970 Minutes, pp. A66-A69.
  2. Supra, pp. 269-273.
  3. Apart from those already mentioned in the course of this study, themes considered by other consultations held by the EACC, or in some cases sponsored by it in conjunction with other agencies, include the following: Medical Work (Hong Kong 1959), The Healing Ministry of the Church (Tokyo 1967); The Place of Education in the Mission of the Church (Singapore 1961), Ecumenical Strategy in the Universities of Asia (Hong Kong 1966), Christian Education (Hong Kong 1966), Christian Education and Lay Training (Singapore 1967); The Mission of the Church and Cultural Minorities in Asia (Sagada 1965), Rural Life (Manila 1965); The Christian Journalist in Asia (Bangkok 1963), Mass Communication (New Delhi 1961), Art and Mass Communication (Hong Kong 1964), Christian Literature and Mass Communication (Seoul 1967); Home and Family Life (Chiangmai 1958), The Christian Home and Family Planning (Octacamund 1960), The Christian Home and Changing Society (Petchburi 1962), Men — Women Together in Christian Service (Tokyo 1966); Christians in Industry and Lay / ....

findings they might reach, whether basically similar to or different from those of the Kuala Lumpur Assembly, one point of real significance about these conferences was the fact that Asian Christians could now come together, in many cases for the first time, to share their insights on certain issues of common concern and to formulate their response to them. For example, the consultation on new forms of Christian service held at Onyang was the first of its kind ever held in the seventy-five years' history of the Korean Church. That consultation, Won Yong Kang said, was "an epoch-making moment and opened a new chapter in the history of the Korean Church".<sup>1</sup> The "central initiatives" from the EACC had undeniably helped spread Christian concern for social and economic development and other related issues among the Christian communities in East Asia.

(b) The first Asian Christian insights on "development"

But if Asian Christians were beginning to show concern, they were also beginning to note that their nations had been extremely slow in the advance towards economic progress and that the majority of their people still lay in the bonds of harsh poverty and backwardness. As described in Section I, many factors had contributed to this persistence of poverty and underdevelopment; these had included the unexpectedly rapid growth of population, internal political instability, slow changes in social and economic structures and attitudes, inter-Asian and international tensions, injustice in international trade and the adverse effects of foreign aid. The gap between the rich and the poor nations as well as between the rich

---

Lay Training (Kyoto 1966), Modernisation of Asian Societies (Seoul 1967), Urban Industrial Mission (Bangkok 1968).

1. Won, "The First Step Forward Toward the Renewal of Churches in Korea," in New Forms of Christian Service and Participation in Korea: Onyang Consultation 1962, pp. 1, 3.

and the poor among the Asian peoples themselves was widening, thus creating the danger of more conflicts and instability in each Asian nation and in the world. It had become increasingly impossible to treat political, social and economic developments as separate from each other; in the light of actual events, all these had proved to be closely inter-related in East Asia, and had formed, in effect, the integrative aspects of the whole process towards full development, whether of persons, nations, regions, or the world. The word "development" could no longer be understood as merely economic growth, but rather as "an overall social process" which included "economic, social, political and cultural aspects" with the full development of the human as its ultimate goal. The growing understanding was that "these different aspects are interdependent. Development of one of them produces development of the others, and, inversely, stagnation of one hinders development of all."<sup>1</sup>

Asian Christians were alert to these "frustrations of nation-building" and the necessity of viewing development as a total social process which would ultimately either enhance or downgrade the dignity of the person and the common humanity of man in East Asia.<sup>2</sup> The full development of man as man had become not only a great responsibility of each Asian nation but also a crucial concern of the churches. Simatupang described this Christian concern as "the unfinished task of the Church in an unfinished revolution". He observed that there were three elements in this "unfinished revolution" in East Asia. The first was "the element of liberation", understood as "a personal and national liberation from a variety of factors,

---

1. G. Gutierrez Merino, "The Meaning of Development," in In Search of a Theology of Development: Papers from a Consultation on Theology and Development held by SODEPAX in Cartigny, Switzerland, November 1969 (Geneva: SODEPAX, WCC), pp. 121-122.

2. "Asian Youth — Its Political and Economic Life," an address by David Sobrepena of the Philippines in Christ the Life: Report of the Asian Christian Youth Assembly, Part One, p. 2.



experienced as impositions and felt as hindrances to the growth of one's own identity, the development of potentialities, and the attainment of legitimate aspirations"; slogans such as anti-imperialism, anti-capitalism, and anti-feudalism, he said, were the expressions of this idea of "liberation". The second element was "progress and development" held "with bounding optimism and sometimes exaggerated hopes", and the third was "the will to enter the international world, free from all manifestations of inequality and inferiority". Simatupang believed that unless these elements could reach a certain point of satisfaction, the revolutions seen in East Asia would always be felt as "unfinished" and, despite all disappointments, failure, frustrations, and sufferings, would provide enough dynamic for the revolutions to continue. If necessary, old ways would be abandoned and new ones adopted in order to achieve the objectives and aspirations implicit in these three elements.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Simatupang's observation helps to explain the many political upheavals, social turmoils and international tensions in East Asia in the past twenty-five years as the Asian people have struggled to liberate themselves from all kinds of oppression in order to find personal as well as national fulfilment in development and self-identity.

But Asian Christians were not alone in their concern for the developing situation and new understanding of development. The 1966 World Conference on Church and Society, preparations for which had begun in about 1962, concentrated its attention on world social, economic and political development. The Conference brought to the attention of many Christians and churches in the world the injustices embodied in the existing structures of international trade and foreign aid and the widening gap between the rich and the poor nations of the world.<sup>2</sup> M.M. Thomas pleaded for a

---

1. T.B. Simatupang, "Life in Christ — Called to Service and Nation Building," in Christ the Life: Report of the Asian Christian Youth Assembly, p. 62.

2. See World Conference on Church and Society Official Report, "Issues of / ....



recognition of the deeper implications of this widening gap in relation to world politics and the issues of war and peace. He believed that the coming together of the developing nations at the first UNCTAD Conference at Geneva in 1964 signified the emergence of a new bloc of poor nations as a dominant force in world politics.<sup>1</sup> The Geneva Conference appealed to the WCC and churches everywhere to be actively concerned for the various issues in development, asking the churches in the developing countries to "bear witness to and serve their nations by taking the initiative wherever possible and sharing whole-heartedly in any effort to overcome obstacles and promote rapid development, while at the same time taking into account the spiritual and moral dangers involved in any rapid change".<sup>2</sup>

The EACC's efforts in helping Asian churches towards an active participation in this changing phase of development can be examined in two important conferences held in May 1966 and October 1967. The first, on "Christians in Industry and Lay Training," was held at Kyoto, Japan, and the second, on Church and Society with its main theme "Modernisation of Asian Societies," at Seoul, South Korea. The Seoul Conference is of great importance since it explored the meaning of modernisation in East Asia in relation to political and international affairs, to economic life, and to social and cultural change. It was, therefore, in fact, an attempt to achieve fuller discernment in the area of development, as this had gradually been understood to be a process comprising interdependent political, social and economic elements. The Conference was also a

---

of Special Importance to Developing Countries" and "Conclusions and Recommendations" on pp. 66-93.

1. M.M. Thomas, "Awakened Peoples, Developing Nations and the Dynamics of World Politics," in Z.K. Matthews (ed.), Responsible Government in a Revolutionary Age (New York: Association Press; London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 36; also v. supra, pp. 28-34.
2. World Conference on Church and Society Official Report, p. 91.

follow-up of the 1966 World Conference at Geneva. Forty-five participants from twelve Asian countries attended the Seoul Conference and its importance can also be seen in the fact that two Roman Catholic representatives were present.<sup>1</sup>

The central concern of the Kyoto Conference was supposed to be Christian responsibility in Asian industrial society and not the question of development as such. However, the findings of the Conference show that in dealing with the question of industrialisation it had also to deal with the whole question of development. The Conference recognised that there were many factors essential to successful development in East Asia, such as population growth control, justice in international trade and foreign aid, and economic interdependence of nations. But it stressed human development as the first step towards full development. Thus, as seen from its findings, the Conference held that there were three main factors essential to successful development: these were integration and stability of Asian society, the spirit of self-reliance, and able leadership and human values.

At Kyoto, S.L. Parmer of India strongly emphasised national unity and a deep sense of community as prerequisite to the mobilisation of a nation's material and human resources for development. The role that could be played by Christians in this regard, he believed, was not their "ability" but their "availability" to create community. In the midst of all the tensions and problems in Asian society, they could serve as "centres around which community can be created between the forces of tension".<sup>2</sup> With similar emphasis on integration, Kikuo Yamaoka of Japan spoke of the necessity of paying respect to regional spiritual traditions and religious values in development programmes. He saw the need for

---

1. Seoul 1967 Report, p. 3.

2. S.L. Parmer, "Possibilities and Problems of Industrialization in Asia," in Kyoto 1966 Report, pp. 45-51.

indigenisation of economics in an Asia where religions were still playing a vital role in man's life.<sup>1</sup>

Parmer also stressed self-reliance. Those nations in Asia and other parts of the world which had succeeded in developing a stronger sense of self-reliance, he observed, were the ones that had made greater economic progress. Both Parmer and Yamaoka agreed that Asian nations should ask for more opportunities of foreign trade than foreign aid and there should be more economic co-operation among the Asian nations themselves.<sup>2</sup> Parmer differentiated between material resources and human resources. The quality of the latter, he said, would determine in the long run both the quantity and the quality and the responsible use of the former. But he also concluded that "the most important need for development is not resources but values". For without those values which could provide some form of ideological content for man's economic strivings, he believed, problems and possibilities of development would only remain as they were.<sup>3</sup>

The official findings of the Conference contain very similar views. They state, for example, "the most pressing prerequisite" for mobilization of resources to be "a new sense of national unity"; that "any possibility of authentic economic development requires conditions of world peace and a growing sense of international economic justice"; that there was the "great challenge ... to adapt technology to our needs, and fashion economic and social values which better express the ethos of these Asian nations".<sup>4</sup> Noting that the economic gap between rich and poor nations

- 
1. Kikuo Yamaoka, "The Christian Responsibility and Industrial Development in Asia," in Kyoto 1966 Report, p. 67.
  2. Parmer, "Possibilities and Problems," ibid., pp. 59-60; Yamaoka, op. cit., p. 67.
  3. Parmer, op. cit., p. 60.
  4. Kyoto 1966 Report, pp. 77-78.

had been widening, the Conference felt that there was a need "to understand or at least seek to understand 'development' in Asian terms". It ventured to suggest:

At the moment our nations look upon rapid industrialisation as the solution of our problems. We are eager to "catch-up" with the industrial nations, but "catching-up" may be a myth ... We may be better advised to think of development as a competition with ourselves, our own past stagnation, rather than a race with developed nations.<sup>1</sup>

With its strong, and indeed correct, emphasis on self-reliance, some delegates at the Kyoto Conference seem to have taken a fatalistic view of development in East Asia and thus by implication to have negated what had been said earlier in the official findings of the Conference about the effect on world peace and international economic justice of this widening economic gap. But the emphasis on human values and leadership in development must be regarded as one important insight reached at Kyoto. As Takenaka said in his report of the Conference:

For healthy and responsible economic development, sustaining resources such as capital, raw materials, skilled labor, and market possibilities are necessary. Also required, however, is a catalytic agent which will combine these elements and cause them to react in such a way that a human community is nurtured and renewed for further development.

Similar emphases on integration, stability, self-reliance, leadership and human values came from the Seoul Conference. M.M. Thomas warned that modernisation of Asian societies could not be an imitation of the modern West or a total negation of Asia's past, for either would fail to take serious account of the awakening of East Asia to a new sense of its own selfhood. He said, "Any modernisation must find its roots and dynamism in this new sense of Asian selfhood, rooted in the past but with new creativeness and openness towards the future."<sup>3</sup> The idea of man as a rational being and the idea of man as a responsible personal being

---

1. Kyoto 1966 Report, pp. 77-78.

2. Masao Takenaka, "Christians in Industry — A Reflective Report," ibid., p. 5.

3. M.M. Thomas, "Modernization of Traditional Societies," Seoul 1967 Report, p. 62.

were interdependent. The former had led to material and social technology and an ethic of human welfare, based on empiricism. The latter could be seen in man's search for freedom, justice and community in society. Thomas continued, "The rational could destroy the personal and then we have technological totalitarianism ... the personal may destroy the rational and end up in a privatism indifferent to the structures of social life." "The whole question of modernisation understood as humanisation or liberation," he believed, "depends upon a recognition of the interdependence of the two dimensions of the rational and the personal."<sup>1</sup>

Toshio Sato of Japan was very cautious regarding the outcome of modernisation. He questioned whether modernisation would automatically bring about progress. He would prefer to regard it as a "neutral process": "It is in itself neither good nor bad" — "Whether it becomes humane or demonic depends upon how it is used."<sup>2</sup> Hahn-Been Lee of South Korea then spoke of the necessity of integrating what he described as "formal political institutions" (that is, "institutional structures as the chief executive, the bureaucracy, legislatures and political parties") and the "real political institutions" (i.e. "traditional social institutions" and "emerging institutions as universities, the press, the army, labour unions, the business community and churches"). Their integration was necessary, he said, if conflicts between the forces of status-quo and change, old and new, were to be avoided and "a process of orderly absorption" of the latter with the former could be arranged into the ongoing system of modernisation.<sup>3</sup> Lee also recognised the need for creative and

---

1. Thomas, "Modernization of Traditional Societies," Seoul 1967 Report, p. 63.

2. Toshio Sato, "The Modernization of Asian Societies Viewed from a Christian Ethical Perspective," Seoul 1967 Report, pp. 66, 70.

3. Hahn-Been Lee, "The Political Aspect of Modernization," Seoul 1967 Report, p. 74.



imaginative leadership in this task. The leadership would need to have the vision to open up a new and larger horizon and a sense of common purpose towards which different forces in the society could be drawn together.<sup>1</sup> Yoshiaki Iisaka of Japan then defined the goal of modernisation as "'humanisation' in its widest sense". He observed:

"Modernisation" is a universal goal, which exists despite the difference of ideologies and approaches ... for instance, industrialisation ... is sought after equally by free, socialist, and communist countries. What is done is the same, but how it is done is different; a basic goal is shared by all, but there is a difference in approach.<sup>2</sup>

Iisaka therefore pleaded for a return of the ideals of freedom, equality, and fraternity of the French Revolution, of the socialist and communist bloc, and of the Bandung Conference, so that the process of modernisation could proceed in the context of a responsible world society.<sup>3</sup>

The findings of the Conference reflect the views expressed by these individual speakers. As described earlier in this chapter, Seoul affirmed that even under the impact of modernisation there remained a close connection between religion and society in East Asia. Religion was regarded as having a "stabilizing influence" on the process of modernisation. It would help a person "to become an integrated human being" and not just an "economic self". Thus, Seoul also held that the task of the Church was "to discover how in each situation, the significance of the wholeness of man's existence in the unity of the secular and the sacred emerges". For Asian Christians this would mean an emphasis on "both the Christian responsibility for active involvement in society, and the main-spring of faith and worship which stem from personal commitment to the Lordship of Christ".<sup>4</sup>

---

1. Lee, "Political Aspect of Modernization," Seoul 1967 Report, p. 77.

2. Yoshiaki Iisaka, "Modernization and International Relations," Seoul 1967 Report, p. 97.

3. Ibid., p. 101.

4. Seoul 1967 Report, pp. 28-29; supra, pp. 259-260.



The Conference resolved to support efforts towards regional economic co-operation and hoped for "the eventual integration of the national economies of Asia, in some kind of Asian Economic Community embracing the whole region, as a fundamental step towards the ultimate goal of building an integrated world economic community". It recognised, however, the necessity of each participating nation making similar advances in nation-building, otherwise such regional co-operation might become a domination of the less advanced by the more advanced nations.<sup>1</sup> The Consultation urged Asian churches to "make clear in every way possible that peace is essential for development in Asia today". It pleaded for a definition of national security which would stress "the positive values of economic strength, the depth of national vision, and the strength of participation in national life, rather than one which sees national security as residing solely in military strength".<sup>2</sup>

The Seoul Conference was very much concerned with the problems of "brain-drain", corruption, the feeling of rejection among Asian youth, and the social and economic injustices suffered by the workers and peasants. "Brain-drain" was "not only depriving our nations of valuable resources and leadership, but also subverting our efforts to modernize."<sup>3</sup> "Personal corruption among those engaged in the affairs of government is widespread throughout Asia and this is a bar to healthy modernisation:" the Conference recommended to the EACC "that an exhaustive study be made of this problem".<sup>4</sup> "The future hopes of Asian societies rest with them [the youth] more than ever before," the Conference declared. There was therefore an "absolute necessity of adequate guidance and direction for

---

1. Seoul 1967 Report, pp. 14, 42.

2. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

3. Ibid., p. 15.

4. Ibid., p. 44.

the young, in order that they become creative partners in nation-building. The absence of this guidance can only invite disaster."<sup>1</sup> The Conference noted "great economic inequalities between the urban and rural sectors, the high and low income groups, and the industrial and agricultural sections", and stated, "Development is a means to enhance human welfare. It should therefore result in a more equitable distribution of the fruits of social effort."<sup>2</sup> To ensure this "distributive justice" in terms of, for example, "economic equality" and "greater participation by the masses of people in decision-making processes", changes in social and political structures were necessary, the Conference held.<sup>3</sup> At Seoul, Asian churches were urged to

show their concern for the rule of law by speaking boldly for freedom of association, of speech, and of the press, and against any erosion of fundamental liberties as embodied in the Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. In particular, they should take a bold stand against arbitrary arrest and detention without trial.<sup>4</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the Conference even suggested that "the Church must also stand ready to endorse the use of civil disobedience in cases where the law is manifestly unjust".<sup>5</sup>

Thus, at both Kyoto and Seoul, Asian churches attempted for the first time to respond to the quest for development in East Asia. They seem to have discerned correctly its main needs which, as described in Section I, included national unity, stability and identity, population growth control, justice in international trade, self-reliance, distributive justice, broader political participation, changes in social structures and attitudes and responsible political leadership. But above all, both Conferences

---

1. Seoul 1967 Report, pp. 22-23.

2. Ibid., p. 16.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 45.

5. Ibid., p. 40; supra, p. 277.

recognised the importance of human values and the quality of persons and leadership in the whole process towards successful development programmes. The Seoul Conference in particular, with modernisation its main concern, broke the ground for Asian Christian involvement in development in coming years. Undoubtedly, these insights of Kyoto and Seoul needed to be looked at in more detail by Asian Christians at local and national levels, coupled with action and programmes planned by the EACC and its member-churches on Christian concern for development. For example, the 1968 Assembly heard the report that there were over fifty urban industrial mission projects in operation in the region. The recommendation, from the Consultation on Urban Industrial Mission held just prior to the Assembly, for an EACC Committee on Urban Industrial Mission and a full-time staff member for the purpose of co-ordinating and furthering these local and national initiatives and programmes was swiftly approved by the Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, the subjects of modernisation and development became the focus of attention at the 1968 Assembly where the central theme was "In Christ All Things Hold Together." In other words, Asian Christian leaders meeting at the Fourth Assembly of the EACC looked forward in the hope that God was holding together the complex process of modernisation and that He would bring it to fruition in East Asia. They realised that in this process the Asian peoples were facing and would face many great problems, frustrations, tensions and conflicts. But they reaffirmed the faith which they had confessed a decade before at Kuala Lumpur, that "Christ is present and active in this broken world and in His divided church and He calls His followers to participation in this presence and activity".<sup>2</sup> They recognised at once "the need for dynamic Christian

---

1. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 11.

2. Ibid., p. 1; supra, pp. 156-157.

presence in the modernisation and secularisation of the traditional societies in Asia". They appealed to the churches in Asia to understand that

... the Christian presence becomes effective only as the Church participates in the process of transformation of these societies, not only responding to the stimuli of other agencies of modernisation ... but also taking the initiative, wherever possible.<sup>1</sup>

On the various specific issues of modernisation, the discernments of the 1968 Assembly were not unlike those of the Seoul Conference. In most cases the Assembly recommended these issues to the EACC committees and member-churches for further consideration and appropriate action. The attention of the Assembly, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, was then centred on the means to effect changes in the political, social and economic structures needed for the success of modernisation efforts.<sup>2</sup>

Development, by 1968, had become the crucial concern not only of the EACC but also of the wider ecumenical movement. The World Conference on Church and Society of 1966 was followed up by the Conference on World Cooperation for Development, jointly sponsored by the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church, at Beirut in April 1968. This was again followed by the WCC Fourth Assembly held at Uppsala in July which "highlighted development as perhaps the most important issue before the churches and the Christian conscience in our time".<sup>3</sup> This concern in the Roman Catholic Church also grew when, in March 1967, Pope Paul VI issued an Encyclical on the Development of Peoples ("Populorum Progressio") which had world-wide influence, and established the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace with the

---

1. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 1.

2. Supra, p. 277.

3. For WCC's growing concern for development, see Line and Plummet by Richard Dickinson (Geneva: WCC, 1968). This book was recommended for the discussions on development at Uppsala; the Statement issued by the Beirut Conference is found on pp. 103-106. See also the Uppsala Report 1968, on "World Economics and Social Development," pp. 45-55, and Volume LVIII, No. 232 of the International Review of Mission (October 1969) with its central theme of "Mission and Development". In Search of a Theology of Development is also helpful.

mandate "to make the Christian community aware of its role in the promotion throughout the world of social justice, development and peace". This growing common concern led to a mutual agreement in January 1968 between the Pontifical Commission and the WCC for establishing a Joint Committee on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX) for the purpose of securing wider Christian support for and concrete action on world development.<sup>1</sup>

But any concern for development is basically a concern for man. In its appeal to all Christians and churches in the world to participate in the concern for development, the WCC Central Committee had rightly said:

Whatever problem we touch in the WCC, we end up asking questions about man. There is man, the brilliant technician who can reach the moon. Man, the weakling who has not yet learned how to make peace. Man, the object of God's love. Man, the searcher for freedom and dignity. Man, who can develop the earth and man who resists development. Man, the oppressor and man, the oppressed. What is man and what should he live for? This is a question on which all the churches must work together with all our people, from the special perspective which is given to us in Jesus who, as Son of God, became one of us and so gave us new meaning to being human.<sup>2</sup>

In their efforts to discern the working of Christ in the years since the end of the War and to formulate their response to His call to participate in His acts, Asian Christians have expressed certain insights on this question of man. Their appeal for Christian social participation has been based on or motivated by certain basic beliefs and hopes. As minority communities bearing their witness in lands of revolutionary changes and resurgent Asian religions, the insights of these Asian Christians could well prove to be valuable contributions to the development of their nations and

---

1. The Committee on Society, Development and Peace, a prospectus on the history, nature, purpose and projected programmes of SODEPAX (Geneva: WCC), pp. 1, 4.

2. Letter to Member Churches, a letter from the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches to initiate a conversation about our common concerns. Issued by the Committee meeting in Canterbury, England, August 12-13, 1969.

peoples, and to the Christian movement in the world.

### 3. In Relation to the Hope for Mankind

Asian Christian leaders recognised the necessity of developing a theology which would include the Christian understanding of man and history and would hope to serve as a guide for Christian participation in the life of society and the nation. Simatupang, as mentioned earlier, saw this need clearly, for he discerned that underlying the problems and efforts of nation-building and development there were "inevitably the more fundamental problems about man, his nature and destiny, about history, its meaning and purpose".<sup>1</sup> Takenaka, too, would certainly regard a correct understanding of history as the dynamic behind Christian social concern. He recognised that in the post-independence years the effects of rapid social change and the "frustrations of nation-building" had brought into the minds of many Asian people feelings of uncertainty, confusion and apathy. In a time of transition, they had been searching for the meaning and the hope of their future. The new religious sects had a great appeal for the Japanese people, due, Takenaka believed, to the fact that they could provide their followers with a sense of certainty, of common purpose and hope, "something anticipated here and now as a common goal".<sup>2</sup> Religion had been condemned by Marxists as "the opiate of the people"; but "if Christianity recovers the true vitality rooted in God's act in history," Takenaka insisted, "it is not and it cannot be an opiate,

---

1. Supra, p. 247.

2. Masao Takenaka, "Between the Old and the New Worlds," in Egbert de Vries (ed.), Man In Community (New York: Association Press; London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 47. See also his address given at the Asian Christian Youth Assembly, "Christ the Lord of Life and History," and printed in Christ the Life (ed. Nababan), p. 88.



but a vital awakening force which awakes the inner conscience and ...

- develops the responsible selfhood of man in history".<sup>1</sup> "History," he held, "is the stage on which God is presenting his drama [of redemption], reaching toward the victory and the final fulfilment;" it is "the battleground of the kingdom of God. He is the Lord of history and every one of us is participating."<sup>2</sup> Takenaka affirmed: "Man has irreplaceable and irreducible hope in Jesus Christ. It is the hope with which one can continually present a Christian witness in the midst of our struggling world."<sup>3</sup>

What will follow from here then are some Asian Christian insights into the meaning of the hope in Christ not only for the Asian Christians themselves but also for the rest of the Asian peoples and nations and indeed the whole of mankind. The first theme is that of "the Lordship of Christ", which has formed the main theological basis of Christian social concern for many Asian Christians.

(a) The rule of Christ over all things

"The starting point of all ecumenical social thought has been the universal Lordship or Kingship of Christ over the world," M.M. Thomson has rightly observed.<sup>4</sup> The Lordship of Christ was the theme of a study programme undertaken by the WCC after its Second Assembly held at Evanston in 1954. It was thought that this study was needed in order to give "a supporting and direction-giving theology" for the increasing involvement of the World Council in the social issues of the time.<sup>5</sup> Even before the

1. Takenaka, "Christ the Lord of Life and History," p. 88.

2. Ibid., pp. 89, 86.

3. Takenaka, "Between the Old and the New Worlds," p. 53.

4. M.M. Thomas, "The Christian Basis of Social Concern," Church and Society (September 1961), p. 66.

5. Gaines, The World Council of Churches, p. 839. See also Paul Abrecht, "The Development of Ecumenical Social Thought and Action," in H.E. Fey (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance, p. 258.

study programme was launched there were already in East Asia some Asian Christians who took the Lordship of Christ as the theological basis for their social concern,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent spreading of the understanding of that Lordship among Asian Christians could be seen in that it was the dominant theme in the definition of the Gospel received by the Inaugural Assembly of the EACC held in Kuala Lumpur in 1959. In this definition, the Gospel was understood as a "redemption of the whole human race and of the whole created world. By his death and resurrection Jesus Christ reconciled 'all things to himself'." His kingship was said to be "over the world". The meaning of history, including post-war Asian history, was all within His Lordship. From this understanding, there followed the insistence that Christians could not possibly ignore their social responsibility. The definition clearly stated that "the Church should be a full participant in the new life of Asia, if she is to be effective in witnessing to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour".<sup>2</sup>

Indian Christian leaders had similar views and emphases. Without a renewed understanding of "the social and cosmic character of the redemption of Jesus Christ", they held, the "social mission" of the Church would remain "an extra instead of becoming an integral part of the church's mission". They declared:

Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour of all Creation ... the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of creation. He is the Word through whom all things were created. In Him all things will be summed up. In His incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension, and by the sending forth of the Holy Spirit, He has revealed the purpose of God for all things and for all times, and He has reconciled the world to God. All human history — of nations and civilizations, of scientific research, of technical mastery over nature, of art and culture — has its meaning and its true end in Him.<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Supra, pp. 80-82.

2. Supra, p. 157.

3. Devanandan and Thomas, Christian Participation in Nation-Building, p. 290.

Christians in India, therefore, they argued, were involved in the strife and stress of national life, whether they were conscious of it or not. But upon their conscious acknowledgement of this involvement would depend their responsible participation in God's purpose for the Indian nation. "If a Christian is either indifferent to or ignores this responsibility he is denying Christ."<sup>1</sup>

The Lordship of Christ was the underlying theology in the deliberations of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) Conference on Our Calling To Service in Asia Today, attended by about one hundred and thirty student workers representing some twenty-six different Asian countries at Bangalore in late 1961. The principal focus of this conference was Christian participation in nation-building and increasing contacts with men of other faiths.<sup>2</sup> "The underlying theology for this 'holy worldliness' was based on the conviction that Jesus Christ is the Lord of all history."<sup>3</sup>

Individual EACC leaders had spoken of the Lordship of Christ and regarded it as the basis of Christian social concern. The most dramatic statement in this regard was made by E.C. Sobrepena, who, as mentioned in Section II, was noted for his convictions about united evangelistic enterprises, as may be seen from the important role played by him in the formation of the ACEM and in his address given at the Prapat Assembly in 1957 when he was also elected chairman of the EACC. Sobrepena held that there were two factors which were forcing Asian Christians to reconsider their witness in society: these were the movement for the renewal

---

1. Devanandan and Thomas, Christian Participation in Nation-Building, p. 295.

2. Student World (Geneva: WSCF), No. 3 (1962), contains five of the main lectures given at this conference. "Our Calling to Service in Asia Today," reflections on the conference, was written by Kentaro Shiozuki.

3. Franklin J. Woo, "Nation-Building or Community-Building," Church and Society, No. 5 (September 1962), p. 22.

of the witness of the laity, and the rapidity of social change. He cited the Kuala Lumpur definition of the Gospel as an example of this renewed understanding. He then admitted:

Speaking from personal experience it has taken almost a life-long ministry on my part to see this new attitude slowly develop ... As a younger minister, I gave myself whole-heartedly to evangelism as it is ordinarily understood in Evangelical churches. However, Bible study and the challenges all around me led me to see that a really concerned Christian must proclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the world and in all areas of human activity. I came to see that if one would be a faithful disciple of Christ and a teacher of the Word, one must lead men to become true citizens of the Kingdom ...

By the way that we involve ourselves in these human struggles for social and economic progress and by the way we affirm our social concern, we shall make our witness to Christ as the Lord who has reconciled all things to Himself.<sup>1</sup>

However, among the EACC leaders, M.M. Thomas appears to be the one who has argued for Christian social involvement consistently on the basis of the Lordship of Christ. Based on this Lordship, he held there were "some forgotten aspects" of Christ's redemption which would need to be emphasised in the Asian churches as these were "very relevant for the new society emerging in Asia". Firstly, Christ's redemption would need to be emphasised as "a gospel of consecration of the material world and the powers of nature"; secondly, as "victory over the cosmic power of evil"; thirdly, as "the source of the renewal of social institutions and structures". Indeed, Thomas regarded the idea of change of social institutions through changed individuals as "half truth". He argued that society and its institutions were "integral to the nature of man",<sup>2</sup> and insisted that the redemption of the world accomplished by Christ must include the redemption of the structures of human existence. He added:

No doubt, the world refers primarily to the world of persons; but the world of persons is involved in the processes of nature, society and history and cannot be considered or saved in isolation.

- 
1. Enrique C. Sobrepena, "Christians as Citizens," Church and Society, No. 7 (December 1963), pp. 36, 38.
  2. Thomas, "The Christian Basis of Social Concern," Church and Society (September 1961), pp. 68-69.

Therefore, Christ's Judgement and Redemption is "social and cosmic" and includes within its scope the world of science and technology, of politics, society and culture, of secular ideologies and religions. The Christian hope guaranteed by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is that "all things" will be summed up in Him in the end.<sup>1</sup>

J.R. Fleming expressed a similar point of view; he said, "The mission of God is to bring 'ALL THINGS' to redemption."

At the heart of this mission, as we have come to understand it in Jesus Christ, is the love of God for PERSONS. But in the promise of the renewal of the individual person, which is the Gospel, we have also the promise of the renewal of the whole of his life — a promise that should prevent us from thinking of the fulness of God's salvation in terms only of individual "souls", and APART FROM the redemption of the complex of things, structures, relationships, societies, thoughts and religions, which is human life.<sup>2</sup>

Indian Christian leaders reaffirmed their belief in the Lordship of Christ at their National Consultation on the Mission of the Church in Contemporary India held in March 1966. "Proclaiming Christ," they held, means proclaiming that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, that Christ is reigning as the Lord of the whole world and of history and that all things will be summed up in Him."<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, at both the 1964 EACC Assembly and the Hong Kong Consultation on Faith and Order, Asian Christian leaders observed that it was the Lordship of Christ, coupled with the pressures of the East Asian world, that led to the call to renewal that had gone to all Asian churches. They said:

This judgment unto renewal is being felt as a result both of the pressures of the Word of the Gospel as well as of the pressures of the world in which the churches of Asia are set. The pressures of the Word come from a fresh understanding of what it means to follow Him who is the Lord of all life, what it means to be a small community

- 
1. M.M. Thomas, "From the Editor," Church and Society, No. 4 (March 1962), p. 3.
  2. Fleming and Wright, Structures for a Missionary Congregation, pp. 7-8.
  3. "The Mission of the Church and Christian Living in Contemporary India" — taken from findings of the consultation held at Nasrapur, March 1966, Church and Society, Vol. II, No. 7 (January 1968), p. 73.



who nevertheless represent this Lordship, what it means to take history seriously as the place where God's will is to be done, and what it means to know the Holy Spirit as God's presence and power available to His people.<sup>1</sup>

(b) Christ the true and new humanity

In the light of this understanding of the Lordship of Christ, some Asian Christians then proceeded to discover the meaning of East Asian history with all the events, ferments and accomplishments, as well as failures and tragedies, that had marked its course since the ending of the Second World War. In this attempt, many of them came to believe that East Asian history in these years had been a preparation for the Gospel, for the Gospel had been found to be particularly relevant to the questions and issues raised in all the events of this period of history. In Christ, Asian peoples could find the truly human and the new that they were looking for.

Among the EACC leaders, Thomas has been the leading exponent of this view that the "Asian Revolution" was a preparation for the Gospel. In his address to the Kuala Lumpur Assembly, he asked:

Is it not true to say ... because of the new values, because of the new goals of national development based on the concepts of man as person, society as community of persons, history as dynamic freedom, and movement as purpose, there is a widespread search for a Redeemer, a search in which the Person of Jesus Christ cannot be ignored? In other words, people are asking the question: Who is the Christ? Of course, many are also shouting that we need not look for a Christ ... and are offering schemes of self-redemption. For that very reason, the issue between Christ and Anti-Christ has been made much more acute. I think this drawing the whole of Asia into a situation in which Jesus Christ cannot be ignored but has to be accepted or militantly opposed is a preparation for the Gospel.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas expounded his view in more detail in the Duff Missionary Lectures given by him in Edinburgh and Glasgow in late 1965, later published under

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 51; Faith and Order 1966, p. 103.

2. Thomas, "Some notes on a Christian interpretation of nationalism in Asia," in Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 50.



the title, "The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution." He recognised that it was not easy to distinguish Christ and Anti-Christ in contemporary complex life situations. But he believed Christians were called to this "more tortuous responsibility of witness in complex situations" rather than waiting until the Anti-Christ had already exerted its full destructive power, when indeed it would be easily recognisable. Thus the Christian task, he said, was "a continuous confession of responsible participation in secular history, with discrimination between the creaturely and idolatrous, affirming the creaturely and resisting the idolatrous".<sup>1</sup> The ultimate aim of this responsible Christian participation was "to make the message of Jesus Christ intelligible and to make the choice for or against Jesus Christ inescapable".<sup>2</sup> Thomas reiterated in these lectures that

... the Asian revolution is raising the most fundamental spiritual questions about God, man and the world, questions for which Jesus Christ is uniquely relevant ... For the first time, the Asian peoples and Asian religions are seeking a salvation and a Christ, in terms to which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is relevant. Not that he will be accepted. It is a matter of choice. ... It is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore Jesus Christ at the level of modern Asia's spiritual quest. In this sense of making the choice for or against Christ more and more inescapable, the Asian revolution is a preparation for the Gospel.<sup>3</sup>

As described earlier, Thomas could see for himself the betrayal of the personal and the common humanity of man in the "Asian revolution".<sup>4</sup> He recognised very well, therefore, that destructive forces were also at work in the East Asian situation. He said the question which every religious or secular faith was facing in Asia was whether it was adequate to come to grips with the new forces released by the revolution — "the forces of new human creativity and ... the new forces of destructiveness

---

1. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p. 23.

2. Ibid., p. 126.

3. Ibid., p. 32.

4. Supra, p. 266.

which arise from the spiritual self-righteousness and idolatry of the creatures within the creativity itself". Different religious faiths and secular ideologies, Thomas maintained, had come forward with solutions "to seek a salvation in the sense of saving the Asian revolution and the creativeness of the new freedom of Asian man from the new demons which are within them, call them by whatever name". In this setting, he held, the Christian mission with its message of reconciliation and redemption would have "a challenging relevance unknown before".<sup>1</sup> It is important to note here that Thomas did not intend to equate all that was in the "Asian revolution" with the will of God, for in the midst of it, as he recognised, there was also the presence and power of destructive and demonic forces. The Asian revolution as a preparation for the Gospel would therefore include finding a solution to overcome these negative forces.

Many of his fellow-Christians in Asia shared Thomas's view. The Kuala Lumpur definition of the Gospel speaks of the necessity for discerning the work of Christ in the revolutions of contemporary Asia, and for a responsible Christian participation in His acts of renewing Asian society and nations. Christ was said to be "releasing new creative forces judging idolatry and false gods, leading peoples to decision for or against Him".<sup>2</sup> Indian Christian leaders had also made it clear that they could not equate the will of the nation with the purpose of God, for there was "present in every situation, as indeed in every man, the denial of Christ". Their understanding of the working of God in the national movement in India was not unlike Thomas's basic position. The greater measure of dignity, welfare and community brought to the people of India were "signs

---

1. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, pp. 123-4, 125.

2. Supra, p. 156.

3. Devanandan and Thomas, Christian Participation in Nation-Building, p. 295.

and pointers to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ and His love". God was "judging" the Indian national movement, for evil forces had also been at work corrupting the forces of good. Through all these events, God was "leading the peoples of India to ask questions about the nature and destiny of man and the goal of world history at the deepest levels and to face the inevitability of choice between Christ and Anti-Christ".<sup>1</sup> In the National Consultation on the Mission of the Church in Contemporary India, 1966, Indian Christian leaders reaffirmed their belief that

... the discernment of Christ's activity involves ... distinguishing between the creative and the healing forces on the one side and destructive and perverse forces ... on the other. The presentation of the gospel as a message of redemption becomes all the more urgent because of the presence of destructive and negative forces.<sup>2</sup>

Many individual Asian Christian leaders had also spoken of the presence of destructive forces at work. But if Thomas had allowed that these forces could be called "by whatever name", many of them looked at them as the problem of sin, and the problem of overcoming it. D.G. Moses noted that there were many social, political and economic problems common to all Asian peoples. But, he said, added to all these was "the perennial human problem of knowing the good and not being able to do it, the insistence of desire, and the powerlessness of the will".<sup>3</sup> Bishop K.H. Ting of China observed that the change of social system could only "limit the power of sin", it could not solve "the problem of sin": "Sin can only be healed by forgiveness, salvation and grace. It is not a matter of social progress."<sup>4</sup> Won Yong Kang recognised that social problems had "their

- 
1. Devanandan and Thomas, Christian Participation in Nation-Building, pp. 295-296.
  2. "The Mission of the Church and Christian Living in Contemporary India," Church and Society (January 1968), p. 74.
  3. D.G. Moses, "Jesus Christ, the Light of Asia and of the World — The Task of the EACC," in Hong Kong 1960 Minutes, p. 5.
  4. Quoted by Thomas in his address to the 1959 Assembly (Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report, p. 47).

origin in the hearts of people" and that "a revolution of society without a reformation of human hearts is therefore inadequate". He cited the communists' emphasis on "re-direction of the personality" as an example. "It is when we acknowledge that we are sinners," he held, that men can be transformed by the grace of God to become sons of God and co-heirs with Christ.<sup>1</sup> Takenaka observed that a Christian was not unlike his non-Christian friends. For in his participation in the life of the nation, he would experience difficulty, failure, and the necessity of making compromises. But he believed there was one "decisive difference — the Christian had "an indefinable sign of hope in his freedom from sin". "As he accepts Christ's forgiveness and resurrection, which are concretely manifested in history, the Christian is a free man: free from sin, free from death."<sup>2</sup> Simatupang believed that "God's acts and purpose" were to transform the whole creation through the Church and by Christ, "the Lord of history". Therefore, the Christian understanding of all the "human, political, social, economic, and cultural transformations in nation-building" must be based on these acts and on the purpose of God, and on Christ as the Lord. He repeatedly emphasised that "the unfinished task of the Church in an unfinished revolution" must be not only "positive", "creative" and "critical", but also "realistic, because we know the persistence of sin in man and in social life". Simatupang recognised that Christians would "never know for sure" what was from Christ and what from Anti-Christ in the events of history. But, he insisted, like Thomas, "It is in such a situation that we have to think and act responsibly and faithfully."<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Won Yong Kang, "Christian Response to the Asian Revolution," pp. 292-293, 302.

2. Masao Takenaka, "New Frontiers in the Life and Mission of the Church in Asia Today," Student World, No. 3 (1962), p. 347.

3. Simatupang, "Life in Christ — Called to Service and Nation-Building," in Christ the Life (ed. Nababan), pp. 53, 56.

Both the Kyoto and Seoul Conferences, as described earlier, emphasised the great importance of human development as the first step to full development of the Asian nations and as an essential part of it. Their understanding of and demand for able and committed leadership, human values, sense of common purpose and national unity and "integrated human beings", pointed to the necessity for re-direction of human personality or a change in the life of man.<sup>1</sup> The two conferences had in fact come to realise that, ultimately, it would be man himself who could make development either a success or a failure. Indeed, S.L. Parmer had come to regard change in man as a first priority over change of society. He insisted, "We have to reiterate that personal commitment is essential for structural change. The vehicles of grace continue to be men and women who are led to see that social action is a logical consequence of personal faith and commitment. Men are changed by Christ; men change society."<sup>2</sup>

At the Consultation on Faith and Order held in Hong Kong in 1966, Asian Christian leaders strove together for a discernment of the way to overcome this problem of destructive forces and sin, and for a discernment of Christ as the answer to the quests of the Asian peoples and nations. Thus, in effect, at Hong Kong the understanding of the East Asian situation as a preparation for the Gospel was given a deeper articulation.

The Consultation strongly affirmed that only in Christ could man overcome this problem of destructive forces and sin. Besides, there was also the problem of "the very threat of death".<sup>3</sup> It believed:

Crucified and Risen, He frees men from the bondage of sin, having triumphed over it and its deathly cost. Ascended and Returning, He rules and overrules, reconciling all things to Himself till the day when He will hand the Kingdom over to the Father. He is the Lord of life and death; Lord of the powers

---

1. Supra, pp. 289 ff.

2. Samuel Parmer, "Student Unrest," Asia Focus IV, No. 2 (April 1969), p. 13.

3. Faith and Order 1966, p. 25.

of the world; Lord of the force of events in history; Lord of man's eternal destiny — and all in the gracious purpose of the Father who raised Him from the dead and gave to Him the Name above all other name.<sup>1</sup>

The Hong Kong Consultation recognised that the quests of East Asia since the War had been essentially quests for the personal, the human, and the new, for man as man, and believed that only as man accepted Christ would he be made man, true and new. It noted that "all around us man's humanity" was "being affirmed in many ways". But Christ was "present in this emergence of man as man". He was proclaiming "to all men that they recover their humanity only in Him who is man before God". For Christ "bore our humanity, lived our life and died our death; and by His resurrection from the dead has cancelled the signature of death written over human life. He whom we acknowledge as Lord of life today is tomorrow's Humanity."<sup>2</sup>

Christ is also the New Man, the first fruits of the New Humanity. "He is the new man in the purpose of God and the bearer of the new man to all who repent and believe. By the Holy Spirit, God in Jesus Christ has so renewed all creation that man is enabled to live the life of a new creature."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, as mentioned in the last chapter, the Hong Kong Consultation strongly emphasised personal commitment of faith. "No one can believe for me and no one can confess for me" — "It is when men respond by faith in Jesus Christ and turn to God in repentance that they find their fellowship with Him and also find themselves invited to work with Him in obedient service."<sup>4</sup>

The life direction of the new man, Hong Kong held, was "from old to new, from sin to God, from self to others. That which is different and

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, p. 26.

2. Ibid., pp. 22-23.

3. Ibid., p. 28.

4. Ibid., pp. 27-28, 30-31; supra, pp. 226-227.



new in its relationship with God makes it different and new also in its relationship with others."<sup>1</sup> Thus, "confessing the faith" in the life situations of East Asia was "about the person of Jesus Christ and what it means to be a person". The Consultation explained:

In human relationships, we know how men use other men for their own purposes and, because they use them, they also discard them. Men become cogs in an industrialised society, or in the political machinations of nation-building, or in the power struggle between the nations. In Christian communities too men can be valued for their use to the Church. God calls us to love men and use things rather than to love things and use men. The faith confessed is, therefore, of the new humanity in Him who lived completely for others, of the new humanity in which every man is and becomes a real person.<sup>2</sup>

Underlying the quests of East Asia was the Asian people's longing for a full human life, which raised some fundamental questions about man, sin and the world, and God. The very humanity of man, in the individual lives of Asian people, in their societies and nations, had been betrayed by destructive forces and by sin. Asian Christians believed that the fulfilment of their people's longing for true humanity and victory over destructive forces could only be found in the new creation that had been brought into being by God through Christ. Christ was the ultimate answer to the quests of the Asian peoples. In Him, they could find the true man, the New Man. In him, they could find the dynamic and strength for their struggles for a fuller manifestation of true humanity in East Asia and in the world.

(c) Christ the Saviour and future of all

Belief in the Lordship of Christ over all things raised another vitally important question for some Asian Christians — namely, the question of the ultimate hope of mankind. Some Asian Christians attempted to

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, p. 29.

2. Ibid., p. 33.

understand the exact meaning of such statements of belief as "the final consummation of ALL THINGS in Christ"; Christ's goal is "to unite all things in Him"; God is to bring "ALL THINGS" to redemption. Indeed, if man was to find his true humanity in the New Man Jesus Christ, Asian Christians had to ask how human struggles for the personal, the common humanity of man, social justice, peace, social and economic development, were related to the New Humanity and the new creation which had already been brought into being by the action of God through the death and resurrection of Christ. In other words, how were the proximate hopes of East Asia related to the ultimate Christian hopes, and what did the latter have to say to the former?

Among EACC leaders, D.T. Niles was one who gave some very important answers to this question. He first affirmed that "the heart of Christianity is not concern for the soul but concern for the world ... The end-event of the Christian life is not simply salvation of the person but a new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:1), each person's salvation being his share in this new creation (Rom. 8:20f);"<sup>1</sup> and again:

There is only one end-event towards which all things move, their re-creation in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:10). There is only one finale to the story of man (Rev. 21:23,26), and that will be its fulfilment in the eternal city where God and His Christ are the light by which men will walk and into which the treasures of the nations will be gathered.<sup>2</sup>

But Niles stressed that men could not limit the ways of God in extending His love and mercy to mankind. He confronted the question of the salvation of all men by arguing:

Let our Lord's own parable concerning the last judgment say the last word. The sheep and the goats are separated (Matt. 25:40). So, at the last, will God's judgment separate men. And the judgment turns on the question, Had they accepted Him? But, as the parable makes clear, the form in which He had presented Himself to them for their acceptance was the form of one despised and rejected of men.

---

1. Niles, Upon the Earth, p. 52.

2. Ibid., p. 72.

There is no salvation except in Jesus Christ, but who shall decide how and in what guise Jesus comes to men and claims their acceptance!<sup>1</sup> (Italics mine.)

Niles agreed, "The New Testament will allow no diminution of the fact that there is only one Saviour—Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12); nor will it allow any compromise of the fact that salvation is by faith in Him (Rom. 1:16) ... But it foils," he argued, "all attempts to enclose these facts in tightly-thought systems of belief (John 1:4,9) or to make them at home within the boundaries of the visible Church."<sup>2</sup>

Niles admitted that "the New Testament does not allow us to say either Yes or No to the question: 'Will all men be saved?'"<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, he seems to have held that all men had already been saved, except that they did not know the accomplished fact. He quoted St. Paul for the view that there was "a direct connection ... between the liberty of the sons of God—those who are in Christ—and the liberation of the whole cosmos" (Rom. 8:21,14,11,19), and said:

Faith and Hope jump from the redeemed community to the redemption of all things, a jump which is possible only because the in-between situation of belief and unbelief is comprehended within the mystery of God's plan of salvation.<sup>4</sup>

"He [Christ] is ALREADY the redeemer of each man's life," Niles held. "He does not become a redeemer when we accept him as redeemer."<sup>5</sup> He compared Christ to the centre of a big circle inside which there were smaller circles each with its own centre, representing all human activities, religions and ideologies; and went on to explain:

There are some people who think of evangelism as picking up a person from one circle and putting him into another circle. This is what we call Noah's Ark type of evangelism: to bring in the

---

1. Niles, Upon the Earth, p. 73.

2. Ibid., p. 93.

3. Ibid., p. 96.

4. Ibid., p. 71.

4. D.T. Niles, "Christ the Redeemer of Life," in Christ the Life (ed. Nababan, 1965), p. 81.

animals one by one. Of course, all these circles are, according to our faith, already WITHIN the larger circle of which the centre is Jesus Christ. He is their Lord ALREADY, he is their Saviour ALREADY, he is their Judge ALREADY. Whether they like it or not, whether they know it or not, it does not change the fact.<sup>1</sup>

"Jesus Christ is already at work in the lives of each man and each woman across the world, saving and seeking to save," Niles said. "And when we evangelize, we are trying to tell the people that there is something in their lives already, making them do certain things, which are making them think certain things. I am going to tell you who that is: ... his name is Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup> With such an understanding of salvation, Niles inevitably believed in the final unity of mankind. "The clue to the meaning of history," he said, "is that God became part of it in Jesus Christ, and that the mission of Jesus Christ is a continuing mission weaving together the many strands of human history into one movement."<sup>3</sup>

Indian Christian leaders appear to have held a somewhat similar view:

God has radically altered the direction and course of history in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The world of disunity, conflicts, endless problems and frustration has already been ended in Him. By the grace of God we know that already the world IS redeemed, IS at peace in Him. We ARE brothers for whom Christ died across every barrier of ideology, race and culture. This is our faith.<sup>4</sup>

Some of them suggested that one possible basis for limited common worship with non-Christians was to regard the latter as "potentially redeemed in Christ". "Therefore," they said, "those who are sincere seekers and are still outside the Christian fold are potential Christians and members of the 'latent church'."<sup>5</sup>

- 
1. Niles, "Christ the Redeemer of Life," in Christ the Life, pp. 81-82.
  2. Ibid., p. 83.
  3. Niles, "The Ecumenical Task," in Situation Conferences Report, p. 20.
  4. Devanandan and Thomas, Christian Participation in Nation-Building, p. 292.
  5. J.R. Chandran and W.Q. Lash (eds.), Worship in India (Geneva: East Asia Theological Commission, WCC, 1961).

Similarly, M.M. Thomas would not make a division of world history into secular history and salvation history; these were the obverse and reverse sides of the same history, he maintained. He therefore argued that whenever the wrestling of the Asian peoples with the issues of their existence led men to an openness to Christ, "however strange its religious or secular expressions may be, the underlying faith must be considered as taken into the salvation history, the history of the New Creation."<sup>1</sup> He held, "Certainly the boundary of the new humanity in Christ is not the same as that of the empirical Church of Christ which is but the witness of the new creation. The new creation, the Kingdom, cuts across the Church and the world."<sup>2</sup> The Christian task was to make the message of Christ intelligible and to make the choice for or against Him inescapable. However, he said, "what conscious rejection of Christ by more and more people in Asia will mean to the religious cultures and politics of Asia we cannot say now. Nor can we say what conversion of many more Asians will mean to them." But one certainty in this missionary encounter would be, he believed, that "the Church of Christ will understand new facets of Christian truth and the Church will have realized more of its universality".<sup>3</sup> Here Thomas is in agreement with the important views expressed by two other Christian leaders in East Asia — Bishop K.H. Ting of China, who said:

The Christ who is risen and now sits at the right hand of God is not only the Lord of the Church but also the Lord of the World. The secular movements of the people have an important

- 
1. M.M. Thomas, "Some Comments," ER XVIII, No. 1 (January 1966), p. 23. This article was Thomas's reply to H.H. Wolf, who criticised him for identifying the events of East Asia with the will of God and failing to draw a distinction between God the Creator and God the Redeemer. Wolf's article, "Christ at Work in History," was printed in the same issue (pp. 1-20). See also Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p. 102.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid., p. 126.



significance. What man achieves in history is finally not to be negated or destroyed but, in the new heaven and new earth, will be received in Christ and transfigured — <sup>1</sup>

and Paul D. Devanandan of India, who expressed his faith thus:

In that new heaven and new earth we will not be able to distinguish the New from the Old. It is not for us to indicate what will be preserved and in what manner. For we cannot tell how God will bring his purpose for mankind and his world to a conclusion. But in so far as we identify ourselves with the will of God as revealed in Christ, we can be certain that we shall be working along the line of that purpose and not against it. <sup>2</sup>

This faith in Christ as the Saviour and the Future of mankind was expressed in the name of all the East Asian churches and church councils, members of the EACC, at Hong Kong:

We confess that Christ is the Lord, the Judge and Fulfilment of all history. Therefore, we affirm that He is at work even now in the Asian revolution which is under His judgment and mercy and which in the fulness of time He will redeem. As we act in obedience to His will we are given light to discern the hand of God moving in the events of Asia today. Where people work to make power serve justice, they are setting up signs pointing to the ultimate unity of power and justice in Christ. Where people strive for freedom, they are setting up signs pointing to the end, when all bonds will be taken away. Where people are fighting poverty, they are setting up signs pointing to the overflowing grace which God offers us in Christ. When people are working to overcome tensions and enmities and to reconcile groups, nations and races opposed to each other, they are setting up signs pointing to the great consummation when God will bring together all who are apart. <sup>3</sup>

"IN CHRIST ALL THINGS HOLD TOGETHER" <sup>4</sup>

- 
1. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p. 27; quoted from Ting's speech given at the All-Christian Peace Assembly, Prague, June 1961. A shortened version of Ting's speech was printed in Church and Society (March 1962), pp. 56-58.
  2. Thomas, The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p. 126; quoted from Devanandan's book, Preparation for Dialogue (Bangalore: Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, 1964), p. 192. However, this same statement by Devanandan can also be found in his address to the WCC New Delhi Assembly 1961, "Called to Witness," printed in ER XIV, No. 2 (January 1962), pp. 162-163.
  3. Faith and Order 1966, p. 81.
  4. This was the central theme of the EACC Fourth Assembly held at Bangkok 1968. From Colossians 1:17.



ENDPIECE:

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

## RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

---

We believe that He is using the secular movements and events which are taking place in Asia, with such rapidity and in such strength, to make it impossible for the churches to remain as they are.<sup>1</sup>

In the process of responding to the quests of East Asia in the decades following the Second World War, Asian Christians and churches gradually renewed and deepened their understanding of the Gospel and the mission and unity of the Church. They also gradually recovered the meaning and implications of being the church with its own selfhood among the new nations.

The Asian Christian understanding of the Gospel and the mission of the Church in the years from 1945 to about 1957 was marked by its strong emphasis on evangelism, understood primarily as preaching the Gospel and making converts, to the increase of the membership of the churches. It was clearly a one-sided understanding. Christian social concern was regarded as secondary to what was believed to be the "primary", "urgent" and "unfinished" task of evangelism. But the desire for concrete expressions of Asian Christian solidarity in evangelism and unity brought the EACC into being at Prapat, Indonesia, in 1957. Undeniably, the prevailing tide of nationalism had played an important part in ushering in the EACC, but at the same time its formation was delayed by the very fear of narrow Asian nationalism and fragmentation of the worldwide ecumenical movement and its central structures felt by some world ecumenical leaders.

---

1. Bangkok 1964 Statements, p. 58.

The Inaugural Assembly of the EACC held at Kuala Lumpur in 1959 marked the beginning of a renewal leading to a deeper understanding of the Gospel and the mission, unity and selfhood of the Church in the Asian churches. For the Asian peoples it was a time of searching for foundations and structures for their emerging society and new nationhood. This also led Asian Christians to consider the selfhood of their churches, so that in fact the search for a new selfhood of the church may be said to have corresponded with the search for the selfhood and identity of the nations. But Asian Christian leaders and the EACC made it clear that while they believed in a "national" church, the latter could only mean a church, not of the nation, but having its life and mission in and for the nation. The definition of the Gospel propounded at Kuala Lumpur was characterised by its understanding of the cosmic nature of Christ's redemption and the strong insistence that Christians must go out into the East Asian situation to discern what Christ was doing in the Asian peoples' struggles for nation-building and development and be responsible participants in His working. But such strong insistence raised the question of the relationship between evangelism and social concern. There was a criticism that evangelism had been neglected, a dissatisfaction which, if not attended to, might lead to divisions among Christians.

The Consultation on Faith and Order held in Hong Kong in 1966 marked another step forward to a deeper understanding of the Gospel and the life and witness of the Church. Its belief in the norms provided by the Scriptures and in the central elements of the Christian faith, and its understanding of the two directions of the Christian confession (personal commitment to Christ and confessing Him in the multiple situations of contemporary Asian social and political life — Christ the New Man and the New Humanity) could well become the means of drawing all Christians together with renewed understanding of their theological and missionary tasks in East Asia. Its understanding of the concept

"confessing church" and of Christ as truly human and the New Man were extremely relevant to the quests of contemporary East Asia. Hong Kong, Asian Christian leaders at the Consultation had rightly observed, could only represent "a beginning" in the renewal of the Asian churches as "confessing churches". They hoped:

From it must flow a richer life together for the churches in Asia. It needs to be followed by an attempt of the churches in Asia to write a common confession. From it must follow also among the churches in Asia a greater commitment to the cause of mission, a greater dedication in the quest for church unity and greater willingness to be and become themselves renewed in faith and contemporary obedience.<sup>1</sup>

However, as the Asian churches entered the 1970s, it became apparent that much of what had been hoped for in Hong Kong would be forthcoming only with faithfulness, watchfulness and perseverance on the part of Asian Christians as a whole. From the late 1960s, Asian Christians were beginning to find new problems within their own communities and there were signs of crucial changes in the nature and scope of the quests of the Asian peoples and nations. The response of Asian Christians to these new issues could well decide whether or not the new sense of unity, mission and selfhood of the Church achieved during the two and a half decades since the War would be firmly established and a genuine Asian Christian confession of the Faith, relevant to the contemporary East Asian situation, emerge. Two new issues were: (i) the tendency towards a new disunity within the Asian Christian communities, and (ii) new developments in Asian and world economics and politics.

The Hong Kong Consultation recognised very well that on their way to total mission, unity and the establishing of the selfhood of the Church in East Asia, Asian Protestant and Orthodox churches had yet to develop a much closer relationship with the Roman Catholic churches who formed more than half the total Asian Christian population. The Second Vatican Council

---

1. Faith and Order 1966, pp. 11-12.

had created a new spirit of openness and readiness within the Roman Catholic Church for co-operation with other Christians, and in East Asia there had been some signs of such co-operation between the Roman Catholic churches and the EACC. The former had observers present at both the Seoul Conference of 1967 and the 1968 EACC Assembly. But the most encouraging sign was the Asian Ecumenical Conference for Development held in Tokyo in July 1970 which was jointly sponsored by the EACC, the SODEPAX of the WCC, and the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace. At Tokyo, for the first time, representatives of the three major church traditions in East Asia, Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant, met on a regional basis.<sup>1</sup> Closer co-operation and concrete joint programmes for Christian concern on development were recommended at and after the Tokyo Conference.<sup>2</sup> It must be the hope of all Asian Christians that the Conference has paved the road towards a much closer relationship between the Asian Roman Catholic churches and other churches in East Asia. Indeed, it must be recognised that all discussions in coming years about mission, unity and the selfhood of the Church in East Asia must include the Asian Roman Catholic churches.

But one issue which could either enhance or ruin the mission, unity and the selfhood of the Asian churches in the 1970s may turn out to be the relationship between those Asian Christians who would describe themselves as "evangelicals" and the rest of the Asian Christians. Evangelicals in the U.S.A. and Great Britain, many of whom have been noted for their apprehensions about if not opposition to the ecumenical movement in general

- 
1. Liberation — Justice — Development: Asian Ecumenical Conference for Development, Workshops Reports and Recommendations, Tokyo, Japan, July 1970 (Bangkok: EACC), p. 1.
  2. For detailed and well-edited account of the relationship between the EACC and the Roman Catholic Church, and the recommendations which came out from and after the Tokyo Conference, see East Asia Christian Conference and the Roman Catholic Church (1964-1970) (Bangkok: EACC).

and the WCC in particular have grown in numbers and influence in recent years.<sup>1</sup> The Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission held at Wheaton, U.S.A., in April 1966, the World Congress on Evangelism (Berlin, October 1966) and the National Evangelical Anglican Congress (Keele, 1967) were all clear signs of the evangelicals' new vitality and strength.<sup>2</sup> These evangelical gatherings have generated a movement drawing many evangelicals together in the world across denominational and national lines. Indeed, it has been the policy of both American and British evangelicals "to encourage and assist in the organisation of evangelical fellowships among churches and missionary societies at national, regional, and international levels".<sup>3</sup> This "Evangelical Resurgence after the Second World War" was greatly aided by the rapid growth of evangelical overseas missionary forces, particularly in the U.S.A.<sup>4</sup> Their expanding influence clearly reached East Asia when the Asia-South Pacific Congress on Evangelism, as a follow-up to the Berlin Congress, was held in Singapore in November 1968, and the Co-ordinating Office for Asian Evangelism was established in 1969 also in Singapore with financial support from the Billy Graham Evangelistic

- 
1. For a detailed account of American and British evangelicals' attitudes towards the ecumenical movement, see Leung, The Evangelical Resurgence after the Second World War and its Relation with the Modern Ecumenical Movement.
  2. For reports of these evangelical conferences, see Harold Lindsell (ed.), The Church's Worldwide Mission: Proceedings of the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission, April 9-16, 1966, at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. (Texas, Waco: Word Books, 1966); Carl F.H. Henry and W. Stanley Mooneyham (eds.), One Race One Gospel One Task: Addresses, papers and reports of the World Congress on Evangelism held at Berlin, 25th October-4th November, 1966 (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1967); Philip Cleave (ed.), Keele '67: The National Evangelical Anglican Congress Statement (London: Church Pastoral Aid Society, 1967).
  3. Lindsell (ed.), The Church's Worldwide Mission, p. 232. British evangelicals have been urged to support this policy by the Evangelical Alliance Commission on World Mission. See One World, One Task: Report of the Evangelical Alliance Commission on World Mission, Evangelical Alliance (London: Scripture Union, 1971), pp. 95-96.
  4. See statistics prepared by Christianity Today, Vol. XIII, No. 15 (April 25, 1969), p. 21.



Association and World Vision International in the U.S.A.<sup>1</sup>

The Hong Kong Consultation had earlier recognised this growing Western evangelical expansion into East Asia as bound to create tensions among Asian Christians themselves. It recognised that evangelicals stood for "important fundamentals that no Church can afford to ignore", and urged that "theological conversations with them, with a view to a strengthened and united confession of Christ [were] urgently demanded".<sup>2</sup> Indeed, with its emphasis on the authority of Scripture, its upholding of the traditional elements of the Christian faith, and its understanding of the two directions of the Christian confession, Hong Kong should have provided sufficient common ground to draw the Asian evangelicals to the EACC for the theological and missionary tasks of making Christ known in East Asia. The 1968 Assembly of the EACC agreed with the observations and recommendations from Hong Kong. The delegates stated: "We feel a deep concern about a tendency towards a new disunity in the Christian community not just between traditional denominations but within them."<sup>3</sup> They urged that evangelicals should be adequately represented in the important decision-making committees of the EACC and that they should be encouraged to participate fully in the EACC's programmes of work. The Assembly also resolved that a major consultation be convened at which issues of differences might be discussed.<sup>4</sup> This consultation was eventually held in July 1970 and was characterised by "warm fellowship, openness, and mutual respect for theological differences". However, it also became clear that the consultation was only the beginning of a long process

---

1. For report on the Singapore Congress, see W. Stanley Mooneyham (ed.), Christ Seeks Asia: Asia-South Pacific Congress on Evangelism, Official Reference Volume: Papers and Reports (Hong Kong: The Rock House Publishers).

2. Faith and Order 1966, pp. 111-112, 90-91.

3. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 33.

4. Ibid., pp. 33-34.

during which many theological differences would need to be discussed in detail.<sup>1</sup> But meanwhile, the Co-ordinating Office for Asian Evangelism, under its executive director, Chandu Ray, formerly Anglican bishop of Karachi, Pakistan, had gone ahead with its objective of organising the Asian evangelicals in various countries into "fellowships" or organisations alongside the local church councils and NCCs. The Office was to co-ordinate and promote evangelical evangelistic enterprises and interests. However, it has also been expanding its functions and programmes, which have been not unlike those of the EACC.<sup>2</sup> Such developments on the part of the Asian evangelicals, with support and encouragement from evangelical forces outside East Asia, seem to represent direct conflict with the aspirations of the EACC for unity, total mission, and selfhood of the Asian churches.

The Asian Christian struggle against confessionalism and its expressions, as described earlier, had indeed entered a new phase. In the 1970s, the struggle would have to include a struggle among Asian Christians themselves and against those forces representing particular theological traditions outside East Asia which might intentionally or unintentionally aim to divide Asian churches and Christians into groups under different labels. In the West, the differences between Christians of evangelical traditions and those in close association with the ecumenical movement and the WCC have been well known. But their differences and quarrels should not be brought over to the Asian churches. They are irrelevant to the history and the life situations of the Asian churches, and can only do great harm to the witness of the Gospel. Leaders of the Asian churches, of the EACC and of the evangelical groups must realise that the future of

---

1. Atami 1970 Minutes, pp. A9-A11.

2. These activities and programmes have been reported in the Newsletters of the Co-ordinating Office published from its office in No. 6, Mt. Sophia, Singapore.

the unity, mission, confession and selfhood of the churches in East Asia will depend crucially on their handling of this tendency towards a new disunity in the Asian Christian communities.

The second issue which could greatly affect the life and witness of the Asian churches in the 1970s has been the widening economic gap between the rich and the poor nations and the new developments in Asian and world politics.

It was Evan Luard who observed that "the most fundamental of all the developments of the modern world" is "the rapidly increasing economic division between the more and the less developed regions of the world". He noted rightly that this has been made "more dangerous" in that it has tended "to coincide with another division of the world, under the pressure of inevitable economic and technological forces, into large-scale continental or sub-continental groups". Political ideology could further subdivide these groups and thus create intense competition between groups of nations or regions. In view of such a developing situation, Luard asked:

Is there a danger of the emergence of a new cold war, more profoundly divisive than any that has so far existed, in which the divisions of ideology correspond, as they have never done before, with the economic class interests of the nations who uphold them, and may perhaps divide the world not only by continent, but by race, and even colour too?<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, as most of the developed nations are in the northern hemisphere and their peoples are mostly white, this could lead to a global racial conflict between them and those poor nations and their mostly coloured people in the south. Gunnar Myrdal warned: "It is a frightening prospect to have to fear that the relations between developed and under-developed countries will become infested by the colour complex."<sup>2</sup> Yet this "frightening prospect" has been lurking behind the increasing

---

1. Luard (ed.), The Cold War, pp. 16-17.

2. Myrdal, The Challenge of World Poverty, p. 414.

conflicts from the late 1960s between the rich and the poor nations over matters such as world trade, development aid, and international monetary systems.

This developing economic cold war has become even more complex with the People's Republic of China apparently deciding to adopt a more friendly foreign policy towards her old enemy, the U.S.A., and other Western European nations, while her conflict with Soviet Russia seems to have deepened. The growing economic and military power of China and the changes in her foreign policy may present opportunities of more lasting peace or perils of war in East Asia and indeed in the world in coming years. It has been argued that China's change of policy was a counter-measure against the expansionist policy of Soviet Russia, which has been gradually extending her influence into the Indian sub-continent and may eventually attempt to encircle China along the South China Sea and upward to Japan. It would appear therefore that Soviet Russia has taken over from the U.S.A. the role of containing China. As the nations of the world enter into the 1970s, it has become increasingly apparent that a new pattern of world politics is emerging which could well develop into a new cold war between three world powers — the U.S.A., Soviet Russia and China. The smaller and weaker nations in East Asia could once again find themselves in a situation similar to but even more dangerous than that of the 1940s and 1950s. The freedom and development of the East Asian peoples and nations may once again be at stake.<sup>1</sup>

It is in the midst of such developing new patterns of Asian and world economics and politics that the churches in East Asia have to proclaim Christ the New Man and the New Humanity, the Saviour and the Future of

---

1. See feature article, "The Ping Heard Round the World," in Time Magazine (April 26, 1971), pp. 11-21. The People's Republic of China was admitted to the United Nations in October 1971. President Nixon of the U.S.A. visited China in February 1972. In August 1971, Soviet Russia and India signed a twenty-year treaty of friendship, ending the latter's long years of policy of non-alignment.

Mankind. The man of the 1970s has the power, the resources, technology and scientific knowledge to turn the world into either a better world or a world of conflicts, injustices and wars between nations and races. The EACC appears to be well aware of these developing crucial situations. Indeed, the year 1969 marked a new chapter in the life and work of the EACC, when Kyaw Than proposed to the Working Committee that "development" must be one of the EACC's main concerns in "The Second Decade — Witness in the Seventies." He rightly observed that the concerns of the EACC from the time of its formation at Prapat in 1957 had led to "the unavoidable obligation of the churches to respond to the challenge of the so-called 'development' issue". He believed:

The "revolt" of youth, the clamour for narrowing the ever widening gap between rich and poor nations, the aggravating rather than dwindling challenge of hunger and illiteracy with the population "explosion" — all point to the necessity of the churches to examine the form and content of their witness in the seventies against this "development" challenge.<sup>1</sup>

His proposal for an inter-departmental Committee on Development was carried and the new Committee brought together the concerns of the Committees on Church and Society and International Affairs, Urban Industrial Mission, Laymen Abroad, Life, Message and Unity, and Inter-Church Aid for Mission and Service.<sup>2</sup> One of the first functions of this new Committee was to organise, in joint sponsorship with the SODEPAX of the WCC and the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace, the Asian Ecumenical Conference for Development mentioned above. Some one hundred and eighty representatives from nineteen countries of the Asian region were present at this conference. Asian Christian leaders gathered at Tokyo declared that they understood development as "a liberating process which enables persons and communities to realize their full human potential as purposed

---

1. See "The Second Decade — Witness in the Seventies," an outline statement prepared by U Kyaw Than for the EACC Working Committee meeting at Tjibulan, Indonesia, in January 1969, Tjibulan 1969 Minutes, pp. A3-A5.

2. Ibid., pp. 4-5.



by God. Wherever human life is oppressed, enslaved and dehumanised there is underdevelopment."<sup>1</sup>

The Conference therefore recognised that from this perspective, some affluent countries were as much in need of development as the economically poor countries. It rightly stated: "Even in the economically poor countries ... people are crying not for food alone; they need and demand freedom, dignity, justice and participation as well. Their quest is for 'integral human development'."<sup>2</sup>

The Asian peoples might well look forward to the 1970s with despair and uncertainty. But Asian Christians are called to proclaim that Christ is the Saviour and the Future of mankind. In the two and a half decades since the War, they believe that He has led them through many grave perils and great opportunities, sorrows and joys, failures and successes, disappointments and hopes. As they tried to follow Him, amid the problems of their peoples and nations, they discovered on these "frontiers" renewed and deepened understanding of the Gospel and the meaning of obedient faith. The EACC has played a leading and vitally important role in bringing into being the present new awakening in the Asian Christian communities. Its on-going Inter-Church Aid and Asian Christian Service programmes, its many conferences and consultations, have created a new awareness among many Asian Christians that they share a "life together" in a common obedience to Him for the doing of His will in East Asia and in the world. Within the EACC, Asian churches have been growing together and into one another. There has been created a ferment of ideas which would make "costly any attempt to disregard them".<sup>3</sup> The EACC has therefore succeeded to some extent in stimulating new thinking, joint actions, self-examinations, and

---

1. Liberation — Justice — Development, p. 1.

2. Ibid.

3. Niles, Ideas and Services, p. 28.



movements for renewal in many Asian churches. Undeniably, the EACC is also aware of its failings and limitations. Many ordinary members of the Asian churches still need to know the function and the purposes of the EACC. But a significant new beginning has been made and the first fruits of a new movement of the Spirit have been seen. The Asian churches have become aware—in many places if not in all—of new dimensions in evangelism and their common life in Christ. The demand is now to go forward in the faith expressed at the 1968 EACC Assembly:

God is present and active in this broken world and in His divided church and He calls His followers to participation in this presence and activity.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Bangkok 1968 Report, p. 1.

---

## APPENDICES

---

- A: East Asian Christian Statistics
- B: Member Churches and Councils of the EACC
- C: The Constitution of the EACC
- D: Area and Population
- E: World Population Projections for the Year 2000
- F: Final Communiqué of Asian-African Conference,  
Bandung, 24th April, 1955 (extracts only)
- G: The Aims and Purpose of the Association of  
South East Asian Nations
- H: A list of the more notable internal strifes,  
natural disasters, and international conflicts  
in East Asia since the end of the Second World  
War
- I: Gross National Product per head (U.S. dollars)  
approx. for 1967
- J: Indicators of Development in Asia

Appendix A: EAST ASIAN CHRISTIAN STATISTICS

Country	Population	Roman Catholics	Protestants and others	Christians (% of pop.)
Burma	20,477,000	183,713	1,137,084	6.4
Cambodia	4,845,000	52,632	46,000	2.0
Ceylon	9,388,000	737,259	92,533	8.9
China	669,000,000	3,266,000	1,000,000	0.6
India	402,750,000	5,620,054	8,875,336	3.6
Indonesia	89,600,000	1,176,693	6,231,803	8.3
Japan	92,740,000	266,262	676,719	1.0
Korea	31,400,000	413,485	2,687,451	9.9
W. Malaysia with E. Malaysia and Singapore	12,000,000 (1968 figure)		180,000	3.3
Pakistan	86,823,000	304,561	416,265	0.9
Philippines	24,718,000	17,397,000	3,228,150	83.5
Thailand	21,881,000	110,000	33,598	0.7
Laos	3,000,000		11,000	2.0
N. Vietnam	18,000,000	no figure available		3.0
S. Vietnam	16,000,000		150,000	10.0

Sources: E.J. Bingle and Kenneth Grubb (eds.), World Christian Handbook, 1957 Edition (London: World Dominion Press, 1957); Rajah Manikam (ed.), Christianity and the Asian Revolution (Madras: Diocesan Press, 1954), p. vi; Guy Wint (ed.), Asia, A Handbook (London: Anthony Blond, Ltd., 1965), p. 319; Gerald H. Anderson (ed.), Christ and Crisis in Southeast Asia (New York: Friendship Press, 1968), p. 4.

Most of the statistics quoted above are based on Wint's edited volume.

**Appendix B: MEMBER CHURCHES AND COUNCILS OF THE  
EAST ASIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE AT 1964**

---

**Councils                      Churches.**

**Burma Christian Council:**

All Burma Baptist Convention  
Burma District of the Methodist Church  
\* Rangoon Diocese of Anglican Church \*\*

**National Christian Council of Ceylon:**

Methodist Church in Ceylon  
Colombo and Kurunagala dioceses of  
Anglican Church \*\*

**National Christian Council of India:**

Church of South India  
Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India  
Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar  
Orthodox Syrian Church of the East  
North India Province of the Methodist Church  
United Church of Northern India & Pakistan †  
Church of India, Pakistan, Burma & Ceylon \*\*  
Conference of the Methodist Church in South Asia

**National Council of Churches of Indonesia:**

Evangelical Church in Kalimantan (G.K.E.)  
Geredja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah (GKST)  
Geredja Kristen Djawa Wetan (GKDW)  
Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (GKBP)  
Geredja Kristen Djawa Tengah (GKDT)  
Geredja Protestan Maluku (GPM)  
Geredja Masehi Indjili Timor (GMIT)  
Geredja Kristen Pasundan (GKP)  
Geredja Masehi Indjili Minahasa (GMIM)  
Geredja Kristen Indjili Irian Barat (GKI-Irbar)  
Geredja Isa Almasih (Indonesia)  
Banua Niha Keriso Protestant (BNKP) Indonesia.  
Geredja Protestan di Indonesia Bahagian Barat (GPIB)

**National Christian Council of Japan:**

United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan)  
Anglican Church in Japan (Nippon Seikokwai)  
The Korean Church in Japan

**Okinawa Christian Council:**

**National Christian Council of Korea:**

Korean Methodist Church  
Presbyterian Church of Korea  
Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea  
\* Korea diocese of Anglican Church

**Malayan Christian Council:**

- Conference of the Methodist Church in S.E. Asia
- \* Singapore Diocese of Anglican Church
- \* Borneo diocese of Anglican Church

**All Pakistan Christian Council: (West and East)**

- Lahore and Karachi dioceses of Anglican Church \*\*
- Methodist Church in Pakistan
- U.C.N.I.P. in Pakistan †
- United Presbyterian Church of Pakistan

**Philippines National Council of Churches:**

- United Church of Christ in the Philippines
- Philippines Independent Church
- Conference of Methodist Church in Philippines
- \* Philippines Diocese of Anglican Church

**Council of Church of Christ and affiliated missions in Thailand:**

- Church of Christ in Thailand

**Conference of Christian Churches in Taiwan:**

- Presbyterian Church in Taiwan

**Hong Kong Christian Council:**

- Hong Kong Chinese District of the Methodist Church
- \* Hong Kong Diocese of Anglican Church
- The Church of Christ in China (Hong Kong Council)

**Australian Council for W.C.C. (including N.M.C.)**

- Church of England in Australia
- Methodist Church of Australasia
- Presbyterian Church of Australia
- Congregational Union of Australia
- Federal Union of the Churches of Christ in Australia
- The Salvation Army (E. and S. Territorial Command, Australia)

**National Council of Churches in New Zealand:**

- Church of the Province of New Zealand (Anglican)
- Presbyterian Church of New Zealand
- Methodist Church of New Zealand
- The Baptist Union of New Zealand
- Congregational Union of New Zealand
- Associated Churches of Christ in New Zealand
- The Salvation Army, New Zealand

\*\* C.I.P.B.C. is one Church

† U.C.N.I.P. is one Church

\* associated under the Council of the Church of S.E. Asia (Anglican).

Source: Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference  
held at Bangkok, Thailand, from February 25 to  
March 5, 1964, Minutes (Part One) (Bangkok: EACC),  
pp. 138-140.

## Appendix C: CONSTITUTION OF THE EAST ASIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

---

### 1. Preamble.

Believing that the purpose of God for the Churches in East Asia is life together in a common obedience to Him for the doing of His will in the world, the E.A.C.C. is hereby constituted as an organ of continuing co-operation among the Churches and National Christian Councils in East Asia within the framework of the wider ecumenical movement.

### 2. Functions.

The functions of the E.A.C.C. will be :-

- (a) Survey of the mission of the Church in East Asia to the end that the total available resources of personnel and funds may be directed to the fulfilment of this mission.
- (b) Consultation on issues of comity, missionary policy and other subjects of common concern among the Churches in this area, and Churches and missionary societies in other parts of the world related to them.
- (c) Promotion of the participation of the Asian Churches and Councils in the programme and activities of the World Council of Churches by keeping it constantly informed about the concerns and convictions of the Asian Churches with regard to the common ecumenical task.
- (d) Visitation of the Churches and Councils in the area.
- (e) Encouragement of closer contact and mutual sharing of experience between the Churches in Asia and co-operation between them in functional activities through conference, exchange of information and visits of international and interdenominational teams from within the area for specific purposes.
- (f) Exchange of information concerning personnel needs in East Asia which may be met by Churches in other parts of the area; encouraging and facilitating the securing of such personnel; the sharing of the experience of the Churches in international and interdenominational exchange of personnel. Such exchange shall be the primary responsibility of the Churches themselves both to find the personnel and support them. Where the funds of the Churches concerned are found to be inadequate for this kind of programme additional support shall be sought from outside sources.
- (g) To help in interpreting and co-ordinating the programme of the Division of Inter-Church-Aid, Refugee and World Service of the World Council of Churches in East Asia, to



collaborate with NCCs at their request in fulfilling the purpose of ecumenical Inter-Church-Aid. It is understood to mean the collation and distribution of information concerning material and personnel, the transmitting of gifts where this is necessary, and such services as will strengthen the relationship of the Churches and NCCs in East Asia with one another and with the W.C.C. in furthering the aims of ICA.

**3. Membership**

- (a) The EACC will be composed, in the first instance, of those member Churches of the WCC and those National Christian Councils which are constituent units of the Commission of World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC which are situated in this area and which decide to come together in such a Conference. The area of operation of EACC is W. Pakistan to New Zealand.
- (b) The EACC will decide from time to time to invite and accept into membership Churches and Councils in this region which are not already members.

**4. Assembly**

The EACC will normally meet in Assembly once in four years. The Continuation Committee of the EACC, appointed at one Assembly shall convene the next Assembly. It will decide and take action on :-

- (a) the number of representatives each member Church and member Council will send;
- (b) the allocation among the nations of the representatives to the Assembly of a member Church which is international. (This allocation will be made in consultation with and with the consent of the authorities of the Church concerned);
- (c) representation at the Assembly of the member Churches in the area whose present representation in the WCC is through the parent bodies;
- (d) others to be invited whether as non-voting members of the Assembly or as Consultants or Observers. (Among the Consultants and Observers invited there will always be those whom the DWME in particular and the WCC in general have been asked to nominate);
- (e) Fraternal delegates and visitors.

**5. Continuation Committee and Officers.**

- (a) The officers of the EACC shall comprise a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen, a Treasurer, General Secretary and Associate General Secretary and shall be members ex-officio both of the Continuation Committee and Working Committee.
- (b) The Assembly shall appoint a Continuation Committee composed of the officers, and at least one representative from each country represented in the EACC. In the appointment of the Continuation Committee, care will be taken to maintain a balanced representation between the confessions. The General Secretary of the WCC shall be invited to attend.

- (c) When the Continuation Committee is appointed, five of its members shall be designated as a Working Committee with the others normally functioning as corresponding members. Any member of the Continuation Committee shall be entitled to attend any meeting of the Working Committee. If and when some very important decisions have to be taken the whole Committee shall be convened. All papers connected with the meetings of the Working Committee shall be sent to all members of the Continuation Committee. The Working Committee will meet at least once a year, and the Continuation Committee will meet at least once between Assemblies.

- (d) Persons may be co-opted to attend meetings of the Continuation Committee and the Working Committee.

- (e) All full time secretaries of the EACC shall be elected by the Assembly only on the nomination of the Continuation Committee.

The Continuation Committee may replace a full time staff member on his resignation, any new appointment operating until the next Assembly.

All staff members shall be ex-officio members of the Working Committee and Continuation Committee but shall not be entitled to vote.

- (f) The Assembly shall request the WCC to acknowledge the General Secretary and Associate General Secretary as co-operating staff related to the General Secretariat of the WCC.

The Assembly shall request appropriate divisions and departments of the WCC to acknowledge other full time staff members of the EACC as co-operating staff related to their divisions and/or departments.

The Assembly or Continuation Committee may also request special liaison between part time staff members of the EACC and departments of WCC as appropriate.

- (g) The procedure to be adopted in the election of the Continuation Committee and officers shall be election by the Assembly on the nomination of the Steering Committee of that Assembly made with due consideration of the desires of the delegations involved. If the Steering Committee should nominate a person who is not a member of the Assembly such name shall be cleared by consultation with those present from that country as members. (The Steering Committee of an Assembly will be appointed by that Assembly from among its members and consultants.)

- (h) The Continuation Committee will discuss and bring recommendations for decision by the EACC from time to time on the question of inviting Churches and Councils in this region who are not now members of the EACC to join the EACC or to send representatives to its meetings as observers.

Churches joining the EACC must be Churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil their common calling to the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Councils joining the EACC must be Councils which approve this basis.

- (i) The Continuation Committee and the Working Committee will guide the staff in the fulfilment of its duties. Report of the work of the Continuation Committee will be sent to the members of the EACC and interested agencies from time to time.
- (j) A member of the Continuation Committee or of the Working Committee, if unable to attend meetings of these committees may send a proxy from his country who will be a voting member of the meeting concerned provided he is accepted.
- (k) Any vacancy in the Continuation Committee or Working Committee will be filled by the Continuation Committee.
- (l) If any member of the Working Committee is absent from two consecutive meetings without adequate reason being submitted he shall be deemed no longer available and his position shall be declared vacant.

**6. Budget.**

The financial provision for the work of the EACC and its staff will be as follows :-

- (a) Administrative Budget: There shall be a budget providing for the expenses of the full time staff (salary, housing, travel, office, etc.).
- (b) Programme Budget: There shall be <sup>a</sup> budget to cover the cost of meetings of the Working Committee, the Continuation Committee and the Assembly; and cost of international and ecumenical tasks undertaken to fulfil functions of the EACC. Funds for this budget shall be provided by contributions from Churches and Councils in EACC together with contributions from other Churches, from Missionary Societies, from their co-operative agencies and from other sources.
- (c) The EACC will make an annual request to the WCC for assistance towards the budgets, the requests to be made and met in accordance with mutually agreed procedures.

**7. Amendments.**

This <sup>is</sup> constitution can be amended only by the Assembly of the EACC, amendments having been previously circulated among the member Churches and Councils of the EACC by the Continuation Committee.

Appendix D: AREA AND POPULATION

	Area: million km <sup>2</sup>	(%)	1948	Population (millions) (%)	1963	(%)
World	135.8	(100%)	2,349	(100%)	3,160	(100%)
<u>Region:</u>						
Burma	.68		18		23	
Cambodia	.18		2		6	
Ceylon	.07		7		11	
China: Mainland	9.56	(7%)	463	(20%)	720	(23%)
Taiwan	.04		6		12	
Hong Kong	.00		2		3.6	
India	3.05	(2%)	342	(15%)	460	(15%)
Indonesia	1.49		70		100	
Japan	.37		80		96	
Korea: South	.10		20		27	
Malaysia: Fed'n	.13					
Singapore	.00		5		8	
Sabah	.08		1		1.8	
Sarawak	.13	)	1		1.3	
Brunei	.00	)				
Pakistan	.95		73		99	
Philippines	.30		20		30	
Thailand	.51		18		29	
Vietnam: South	.17		7		15	
Total	17.81	(13%)	1,117	(47%)	1,642	(52%)

Source : E. Stuart Kirby, Economic Development in East Asia (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967). p.33.

**Appendix E: WORLD POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE YEAR 2000\***  
(in millions)

	1968	2000	
		Low	High
<u>Industrialised Areas</u>	<u>1,040</u>	<u>1,250</u>	<u>1,400</u>
Europe	460	490	530
Soviet Union	240	320	350
North America	220	290	350
Others	120	150	170
<u>Developing Areas</u>	<u>2,430</u>	<u>4,720</u>	<u>5,560</u>
China (Mainland)	730	1,000	1,400
Other Asia	1,100	2,300	2,600
Africa	330	770	860
Latin America	270	650	700
<u>World</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>7,000</u>

\*The two variants of the projection for the year 2000 are based on assumptions about "low" and "high" fertility. Some fertility decline is assumed in both cases, faster in the "low" variant, slower in the "high" variant. Mortality is expected to continue its decline until the expectation of life at birth reaches seventy-four years. The variants have been selected from the projections in World Population Prospects as Assessed in 1963 (United Nations, 1966), on the basis of the experience in the 1960s.

Source: Partners in Development, Report of the Commission on International Development (London: Pall Mall Press, 1969), p.56.

Appendix F: FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF ASIAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE,

BANDUNG, 24th APRIL, 1955 (extracts only)

The Asian-African Conference, convened upon the invitation of the Prime Ministers of Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan, met in Bandung from the 18th to the 24th April, 1955. In addition to the sponsoring countries the following 24 countries participated in the Conference.

Afghanistan	Liberia
Cambodia	Libya
People's Republic of China	Nepal
Egypt	Philippines
Ethiopia	Saudi Arabia
Gold Coast	Sudan
Iran	Syria
Iraq	Thailand
Japan	Turkey
Jordan	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
Laos	State of Vietnam
Lebanon	Yemen

The Asian-African Conference considered problems of common interest and concern to countries of Asia and Africa and discussed ways and means by which their people could achieve fuller economic, cultural and political co-operation.

G. DECLARATION ON THE PROMOTION OF WORLD PEACE AND CO-OPERATION

The Asian-African Conference gave anxious thought to the question of world peace and co-operation. It viewed with deep concern the present state of international tension, with its danger of atomic world war. The problem of peace is correlative with the problem of international security. In this connection, all States should co-operate, especially through the United Nations, in bringing about the reduction of armaments and the elimination of nuclear weapons under effective international control. In this way, international peace can be promoted and nuclear energy may be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. This would help answer the needs particularly of Asia and Africa, for what they urgently require are social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. Freedom and peace are interdependent. The right of self-determination must be enjoyed by all peoples, and freedom and independence must be granted, with the least possible delay, to those who are still dependent peoples. Indeed all nations should have the right freely to choose their own political and economic systems and their own way of life in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Free from mistrust and fear, and with confidence and goodwill towards each other, the nations should practice tolerance and live together in peace and with one another as good neighbours and develop friendly co-operation on the basis of the following principles:

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality of all races and of the equality of all nations, large and small.
4. Abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country.
5. Respect for the right of each nation to defend itself, singly or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
6. (a) Abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defence to serve the particular interests of any of the big Powers.  
(b) Abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries.
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement as well as other peaceful means of the parties' own choice, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
9. Promotion of mutual interests and co-operation.
10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

The Asian-African Conference declares its conviction that friendly co-operation in accordance with these principles would effectively contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security, while co-operation in the economic, social and cultural fields would help bring about the common prosperity and well-being of all.

The Asian-African Conference recommended that the five sponsoring countries consider the convening of the next meeting of the Conference in consultation with the participating countries.

Source: Guy Wint (ed.), Asia, A Handbook, pp. 798-802.



Appendix G:    THE   AIMS   AND   PURPOSE   OF   THE  
ASSOCIATION   OF   SOUTH   EAST   ASIAN   NATIONS

---

Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia which constitute this Association, are conscious that in an increasingly interdependent world, the cherished ideals of peace, freedom, social justice and economic well-being are best attained by fostering good understanding, good neighbourliness and meaningful cooperation among the countries already bound together by ties of history and culture.

The aims and purpose of ASEAN are:—

1. To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavour in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of South East Asian Nations;
2. To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
3. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;
4. To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
5. To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilization of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communication facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;
6. To promote South East Asian studies;
7. To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.

ASEAN countries have also agreed on the need for regional cooperation in such fields as tourism, shipping and fisheries and means of expanding intraregional trade.

Source: Ministry of Information, Kuala Lumpur, West Malaysia.

Appendix H: A LIST OF MORE NOTABLE INTERNAL STRIFES,  
NATURAL DISASTERS AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS  
IN <sup>EAST</sup> ASIA SINCE THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

---

- (1) 1945 During the months of August and September, 1971, a debate was developed among some readers of the British newspaper, The Daily Telegraph, about "The Human Cost of Communism" in China. Quoting from a document published by the Judiciary of the U.S. Senate, one M.P. reported 63 million dead (D. Telegraph, London, Sept. 16, 1971). Presumably, this figure accounts for all those who had lost their lives by execution, torture, in escape, starvation and hardship, and in the years of war with the Nationalists, in the Korean war, and during the Three-Antis and Five-Antis Movements of the early fifties, the Hundred Flowers Movement and the Great Leap Forward Movement of the mid and late fifties, and the Cultural Revolution from 1965-1968. During all these years, many millions have crossed the border to Hong Kong, Macao, Formosa and other parts of East Asia. The Chinese Revolution has been extremely costly in terms of human lives.
- (2) 1947 Massacres among Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims in India soon after independence in 1947. About half a million lives lost. Six million people crossed the border between India and Pakistan for fear of being killed by the other community. More massacres followed (see Percival Spear, "India, The Political History," in Guy Wint (ed.), Asia, A Handbook, p.65).
- (3) 1950-1953 The Korean War. "58,000 Koreans were killed and 176,000 wounded, more than a million civilians were killed, and another million wounded or injured. The tides of war left 100,000 Koreans orphans and more than 284,000 widows with 517,000 dependent children. About eight million South Koreans were driven from their homes. The cost in lives, wounded, money and effort by United Nations forces reached monumental figures" (see Walter Frank Choiniski, "South Korea," in Guy Wint, op. cit., p.196).
- (4) 1946-1954 French Indochina War.
- (5) 1948 Communist insurrection in Malaya and Singapore. Passed the peak from 1954. Signs of coming back from 1969.
- (6) 1956-1958 Serious army revolts broke out in Sumatra, Indonesia.
- (7) 1956-1958 Severe communal disturbances in Ceylon between communities of Sinhalese and Tamil origins.
- (8) 1959 Laos claimed, country attacked by North Vietnam.

- (9) 1957 Border disputes between India and China led to a short period of open warfare in 1962.
- (10) 1959-1962 Periodical fighting between armies of three political factions in Laos.
- (11) 1963-1967 "Confrontation" between Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines over the establishment of the Federation of Malaysia. Economic co-operation and progress in each country greatly affected. Indonesian troops landed in Malaya.
- (12) 1963 Tension between Malaya and the Philippines over the latter's claim over Sabah. Subsided from 1967.
- (13) 1965 Open warfare between India and Pakistan over their unresolved dispute on Kashmir.
- (14) 1965 Indonesia communists were hunted down after failure of their coup in September. No exact figures possible. "Massacre lasting up to six months" (from Rev. Mr. Tasdik, Motives for Conversion in East Java since September 1965 (Singapore: The Foundation For Theological Education in South East Asia, 1970), p.1).
- (15) 1965-1966, 1966-1967 Droughts in India led to famine and starvation in Bihar State.
- (16) 1967 Thailand and Cambodia accused each other of border violations.
- (17) 1969 Serious racial riots between Chinese and Malays in Malaysia.
- (18) 1970 About 500,000 died in cyclone in East Pakistan.
- (19) 1961 Vietnam War. Terrorism and guerrilla warfare in the South increased from 1961. At the height of the war, nearly half a million American troops involved. Since 1965, 1,050,000 civilian casualties, including 325,000 dead. About one-third of the 29-million population in the South have been driven from their homes. Estimated refugees, 6 million. In Cambodia, 10,000 killed; 20,000 injured, 700,000 have been displaced since 1969 (from Time Magazine, New York, May 10, 1971, pp.24-30).
- (20) 1971 Bengla Desh uprising in East Pakistan. Estimates of death toll in the crackdown by West Pakistani troops range from 200,000 to a million. More than 7 million East Bengali people have crossed the border to West Bengal in India giving mountainous problems to the latter in caring for the refugees. Millions of acres of farmland were abandoned (from Time Magazine, New York, Aug. 2, 1971, pp. 26-34; and The Daily Telegraph Magazine, London, Sept. 10, 1971, No. 359, pp. 14-21).
- (21) Some notable military and political coups - Thailand, 1947, 1959 and 1962; Burma, 1958; Laos, August and December, 1960; Ceylon, 1962; South Vietnam, 1963 (coups and counter-coups); Indonesia, 1965.

Appendix I: GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT PER HEAD (U.S. DOLLARS)  
APPROX. FOR 1967.

GNP PER HEAD

	(\$)		(\$)		
United States	3,670	Lebanon	520	Syria	180
Kuwait	3,490	Mexico	490	Zambia	180
Sweden	2,500	Chile	470	Bolivia	170
Canada	2,380	Jamaica	460	*Ceylon	160
Switzerland	2,310	Barbados	420	*Korea (South)	160
Luxembourg	2,000	Portugal	420	United Arab	160
Australia	1,970	Costa Rica	410	Republic	
Denmark	1,950	Gabon	410	Sierra Leone	140
France	1,950	Mongolia	410	*Cambodia	130
New Zealand	1,890	Nicaragua	360	Cameroon	130
Norway	1,860	Peru	350	Mauritania	130
Germany, Fed.	1,750	Cuba	330	*Thailand	130
Rep. of		Guyana	330	Yemen,	130
Belgium	1,740	Surinam	330	Southern	
United Kingdom	1,700	Albania	320	Central African	120
Iceland	1,690	Guatemala	310	Rep.	
Finland	1,660	Colombia	300	Kenya	120
Netherlands	1,520	*Malaysia	290	*Viet Nam(South)	120
Germany, Dem.	1,300	Turkey	290	*Indonesia	100
Rep. of		Iran	280	Malagasy	100
Austria	1,210	Swaziland	280	Republic	
Puerto Rico	1,210	El Salvador	270	Togo	100
Israel	1,200	Dominican	260	Uganda	100
Italy	1,120	Republic		*Viet Nam(North)	100
Czechoslovakia	1,110	Algeria	250	Botswana	90
*Japan	1,000	Brazil	250	*China(Mainland)	90
U.S.S.R.	970	*China,	250	Congo, Dem.	90
Ireland	910	Republic of		Rep. of	
Hungary	900	Jordan	250	Gambia	90
Venezuela	880	British	240	Guinea, Republic	90
Argentina	800	Honduras		of	
Trinidad &	790	Honduras	240	*India	90
Tobago		Iraq	230	*Laos	90
Cyprus	780	Ivory Coast	230	*Pakistan	90
Poland	780	*Korea (North)	230	Sudan	90
Libya	720	Rhodesia	230	Dahomey	80
Rumania	720	Mauritius	220	Mali	80
Greece	700	Oceania	220	Nigeria	80
Bulgaria	690	Paraguay	220	Tanzania	80
Spain	680	Ecuador	210	Afghanistan	70
*Hong Kong	620	Tunisia	210	*Burma	70
*Singapore	600	Ghana	200	Chad	70
South Africa	590	Angola	190	Haiti	70
Malta	570	Liberia	190	*Nepal	70
Panama	550	Morocco	190	Niger	70
Uruguay	550	Senegal	190	Ethiopia	60
Yugoslavia	530	*Philippines	180	Lesotho	60
				Malawi	60
				Rwanda	60
				Burundi	50
				Somali Republic	50
				Upper Volta	50

\*East Asian Countries.

Source: World Bank Atlas of per capita production and population (1969); Dudley Seers and Leonard Joy (eds.), Development in a Divided World (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 67-69.

# Appendix J: INDICATORS OF DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA\*

TABLE 1  
GENERAL INDICATORS

Country	Population Density (persons per sq. km.)	Population Increase (per cent per year)	Urban Population (per cent of total)	Age Groups under 14 and over 65 (per cent of total)	Illiteracy Rate per cent of over 10 years	School Enrolment (per cent of 5-19 years)
India . . .	148	1.9	18.0	n.a.	77	31
Pakistan . .	102	2.1	13.0	48.0	72	26
Ceylon . . .	159	2.8	15.5	44.5	24	74
Thailand . .	54	2.6	12.0	46.0	14	58
Malaya . . .	36	3.1	42.5	47.0	29	62
Taiwan . . .	315	3.1	n.a.	46.5	16	74
Philippines .	98	2.1	35.5	46.5	24	70
Hong Kong .	3,394	2.7	76.5	41.0	9	66
Singapore . .	2,982	2.9	63.0	44.5	31	77
Japan . . .	257	0.9	63.5	36.0	negl.	91
<i>Comparison</i>						
USSR . . .	10	1.7	48.0	38.0	negl.	78
UK . . .	219	0.8	78.5	35.5	negl.	85
USA . . .	20	1.6	70.0	41.0	negl.	102

TABLE 2  
SOCIAL INDICATORS

Country	Private Consumption (per cent of GNP)	Food and Drink (per cent of private consumption)	Calorie Intake (per day)	Protein Intake (grammes per day)	Urban Housing (persons per room)	Physicians (per thousand inhabitants)
India . . .	n.a.	n.a.	2,060	56	2.7	0.20
Pakistan . .	75	n.a.	2,120	56	3.1	0.12
Ceylon . . .	73	60	2,120	47	2.3	0.22
Thailand . .	73	51	2,120	45	n.a.	0.13
Malaya . . .	65	57	2,400	54	3.0	0.16
Taiwan . . .	67	56	2,440	59	n.a.	0.65
Philippines .	78	50	2,000	45	n.a.	0.14
Hong Kong .	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.36
Singapore . .	n.a.	51	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.43
Japan . . .	52	44	2,360	70	1.4	1.08
<i>Comparison</i>						
USSR . . .	n.a.	n.a.	(3,000)	(85)	1.5	n.a.
UK . . .	65	41	3,280	88	0.8	1.08
USA . . .	63	26	3,090	91	0.7	1.28

n.a.—not available

( ) —estimate

Sources: UN Statistical Yearbook 1963; UN National Accounts 1963; ILO Labour Statistics 1963; FAO Production Statistics 1963

\* from Guy Wint (ed.), Asia, A Handbook, p. 561.

---

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

---



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. PRIMARY SOURCES

#### 1. EACC ASSEMBLIES (in chronological order)

The Common Evangelistic Task of the Churches in East Asia: Papers and Minutes of the East Asia Christian Conference, Prapat, Indonesia, March 17-26, 1957 (printed at Rangoon Gazette Ltd., Rangoon, for EACC, Bangkok). ["Prapat 1957 Report"]

A Report of the Prapat Conference, by Harvey L. Perkins and Winburn T. Thomas (Sydney: Australian Council for the WCC, n.d.).

The Witness of the Churches in the Midst of Social Change: Papers for Preparatory Reading, the Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference, Malaya, May 14-24, 1959 (Kottayam: CMS Press, 1959). ["Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report"]

Toward Kuala Lumpur 1959: Workbook for the Inaugural Assembly, East Asia Christian Conference, ed. U Kyaw Than (printed at Rangoon Gazette Ltd., Rangoon, For EACC, Bangkok).

Witnesses Together: the Official Report of the Inaugural Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, May 14-24, 1959, ed. U Kyaw Than (Rangoon: U Maung U, BBC Board of Publications, for EACC, Bangkok).

Rainbow in the Cloud: Addresses given at the First Assembly of the EACC, Kuala Lumpur, 1959 (published by the Joint Committee for the EACC, the Australian Council for the WCC and the Missionary Council of Australia); available from WCC Library, Geneva.

Church's Witness in Relation to Religion and Society, International Affairs, Religious Liberty: Papers for Preparatory Reading, East Asia Christian Conference, Second Assembly, Bangkok, 1964 (Madras: The Diocesan Press, 1964).

EACC Assembly Work Book: Bangkok, February 25-March 5, 1964 (Bangkok: EACC).

EACC Assembly Minutes Part One: Bangkok, February 25-March 5, 1964 (Bangkok: EACC). ["Bangkok 1964 Report"]

The Christian Community Within the Human Community: containing statements from the Bangkok Assembly of the EACC, February 25-March 5, 1964, Minutes -- Part Two (Bangalore: The Christian Literature Press). ["Bangkok 1964 Statements"]

Ideas and Services: A Report of the East Asia Christian Conference 1957-1967, by D.T. Niles (Christchurch: The National Council of Churches)

Bangkok '68: Statements and Findings of the Fourth Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference (Bangkok: EACC). ["Bangkok 1968 Report"]

2. EACC COMMITTEE MINUTES (in chronological order)

- (1) Working Committee — Calcutta 1957
- (2) Interim Committee — Singapore 1958
- (3) Working Committee — Jaffna 1958
- (4) Continuation Committee — Kuala Lumpur 1959
- (5) Working Committee — Hong Kong 1960
- (6) Enlarged Continuation Committee — Bangalore 1961
- (7) Working Committee — Brisbane 1962
- (8) Working Committee — Chunnakam 1963
- (9) Working Committee — Manila 1965
- (10) Working Committee — Kandy 1965
- (11) Continuation Committee — Hong Kong 1966
- (12) Working Committee — Singapore 1967
- (13) Working Committee — Tjibulan 1969
- (14) Working Committee — Madras 1969
- (15) Continuation Committee — Atani 1970

3. REPORTS, ARTICLES AND BOOKS

ABRECHT, Paul: "The development of ecumenical social thought and action," in H.E. FEY (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance (1970).

AH MYA, Francis and ROGERS, Murray: "What is Christian service?" in New Forms of Christian Service and Participation (Nasrapur 1960).

ANDERSON, Gerald H. (ed.): Christ and Crisis in Southeast Asia (New York: Friendship Press, 1968).

ANDERSON, S.R. and SMITH, S. Stanley: The Anderson-Smith Report on Theological Education in Southeast Asia, especially as it relates to the training of Chinese for the Christian Ministry (New York: Board of Founders, Nanking Theological Seminary, 1952).

Asian Christian Service: Newsletters, Literature and Programme Reports from EACC Office, Bangkok, and ACS Office, Vietiane, Laos.

Asian Churches and Responsible Parenthood, The: EACC Consultation, Bangkok, Thailand, February 21-25, 1964 (Bangkok: EACC).

Asian Conference on Church and Society: Report to the Asian Churches, Seoul, Korea, October 10-16, 1967 (Bangkok: EACC). "Seoul 1967 Report"

BAAGO, K.: A History of the National Christian Council of India 1914-1964 (Nagpur: NCC, India, 1965).

BAE HO HAHN: "The Korean Church and society in new perspective," in New Forms of Christian Service and Participation in Korea (Onyang 1962).

Bangkok 1964 Statements: see EACC ASSEMBLIES

Bangkok 1964 Report: see EACC ASSEMBLIES

Bangkok 1968 Report: see EACC ASSEMBLIES

BOYD, Robin: An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1969).

BRASH, Alan A.: "The mission of the Church and new forms of interdependence," in Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report.

----- : "The new strategy of Christian service in Asia," in New Forms of Christian Service and Participation (Nasrapur 1960).

BRASH, Alan A. "Inter-church aid through EACC," in ICA Consultation 1963 Report.

CHANDRAN, J.R. and LASH, W.Q. (eds.): Worship in India (Geneva: East Asia Theological Commission, WCC, 1961).

CHAO, T.C.: "The articulate word — the problem of communication," IRM 36 (1947).

- - - - - : "Amsterdam in the perspective of the younger churches," ER I, No. 2 (Winter 1949).

- - - - - : The Reconstruction of Christian Church in China (Shanghai: The Association Press of China, 1950).

CHEN, W.Y.: "The state of the Church in China," IRM 36 (1947).

Christian Family in East Asia, The: Report of the Study and Training Institute, held at Chiangmai, Thailand, February 1-April 25, 1958 (London: IMC, 1958).

Christ the Life: Report of the Asian Christian Youth Assembly. Part One, Silliman University, Dumaguete City, the Philippines, 1964-1965, ed. Soritua A.E. Nababan (Bangkok: EACC).

Christian in Medical Work in East Asia Today, The: Papers and Minutes of the East Asia Christian Conference, Hong Kong, December 28-January 1, 1959 (Mysore: Wesley Press).

Christian Presence in Medical Work in Asia Today: Report of the Second East Asia Christian Medical Workers Conference, Tozanso, Gotemba, Japan, April 27-May 1, 1967 (Bangkok: EACC).

Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia, The: Papers and Minutes of the Eastern Asia Christian Conference, Bangkok, December 3-11, 1949 (New York: Friendship Press, 1950).

Christian Service in the Revolution: Report of the Consultation held November 14-18, 1962, in Sukabumi, Indonesia (Bangalore: The Christian Literature Society).

Christ — The Hope of Asia: Ecumenical Study Conference for East Asia, Lucknow, India, December 27-30, 1952 (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1953).

Church and Society: "God, Buddhism and the Buddhists", Rangoon Consultation on Theravada Buddhism, No. 3 (September 1961).

- - - - - : "The Word of God and the nascent religions of Asia," No. 4 (March 1962). Taken from the statement issued by the meeting of Directors of Study Centres at Nagpur, India, in March 1961 on the findings of the Consultations on "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Man" held in India, Hong Kong and Rangoon during 1960-1961.

- - - - - : "The mission of the Church and Christian living in contemporary India," Vol. II, no. 7 (January 1968). Taken from findings of the National Consultation on the Mission of the Church in Contemporary India held at Nasrapur, March 1966.

Church and Society: A Study Outline, based on the report of the Inaugural Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference, Kuala Lumpur, May 1959 published by the Committee on Church and Society of the EACC, 1960).

Church in Southeast Asia, The, ed. Winburn T. Thomas and Rajah B. Manikam (New York: Friendship Press, 1956).

Confessing the Faith in Asia Today: Statement issued by the Consultation convened/...

convened by the East Asia Christian Conference and held in Hong Kong, October 26-November 3, 1966. (Redfern N.S.W.: Epworth Press).

["Faith and Order 1966"]

Confessional Families and the Churches in Asia: Report from a Consultation convened by the East Asia Christian Conference and held at Kandy, Ceylon, December 6-8, 1965 (Bangkok: EACC).

["Kandy 1965 Report"]

Consultation Digest: First Asian Consultation on Inter-Church Aid, sponsored jointly by DICARWS and EACC, at Tao Fong Shan, Hong Kong, October 17-23, 1963.

Consultation on Theological Education in South East Asia, Hong Kong, March 17-26, 1965. Report and papers in SEAJT, Vol. 6, No. 4 and Vol. 7, No. 1 (April-July 1965).

Contributions of Asian Christians to Nation-Building, The: Asian Seminar, February 12-17, 1967, Hong Kong (Hong Kong: The Asian Documentation Centre, Pax Romana ICMICA).

CSI-Lutheran Theological Conversations 1948-1959, The (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1964).

CULSHAW, J.C.: "Developing partnership, findings and recommendations of the General Synod of the Methodist Church of India and Ceylon, 1946," IRM 36 (1947).

DECKER, J.W.: "China and India look ahead," IRM 35 (1946).

DEVANANDAN, P.D.: "The ecumenical movement and the younger churches," in The Universal Church in God's Design, Amsterdam Assembly Series Vol. I (London: SCM Press, 1948).

- - - - - : "Called to witness," ER XIV, No. 2 (January 1962), address given at the WCC New Delhi Assembly 1961.

- - - - - : Christian Issues in Southern Asia (New York: Friendship Press, 1963).

- - - - - : Preparation for Dialogue (Bangalore: The Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, 1964).

DEVANANDAN, P.D. and CARMAN, J.B.: "A colloquium on the Hindu and the Christian views of man," Church and Society, No. 2 (March 1961).

DEVANANDAN, P.D. and THOMAS, M.M. (eds.): Christian Participation in Nation-Building (Bangalore: The Bangalore Press, 1960, for the NCC, India, and the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore).

DEVANESEN, Chandran: "Christians and India's national destiny," IRM 35 (1946).

- - - - - : "Post-Amsterdam thoughts from a younger church," ER I, no. 2 (Winter 1949).

East Asia Christian Conference and the Roman Catholic Church (1964-1970) (Bangkok: EACC, 1970).

Ecumenical Strategy in the Universities of Asia: Report of a Consultation sponsored by the East Asia Christian Conference and the World Student Christian Federation, Hong Kong, November 6-13, 1966 (Bangkok: EACC).

Faith and Order 1966: see Confessing the Faith in Asia Today.

FLEMING, John: "The Christian confession and the confessing church in the New Testament," SEAJT, Special Faith and Order Issue, Vol. 8, Nos. 1 and 2 (July/October 1966).



FLEMING, J.R.: Some Notes on the History and Development of the Malayan Christian Council (reproduced by the Council of Churches of Malaysia and Singapore Office, December 1966).

Footprints in Travancore: Report of the Third World Conference of Christian Youth, December 11-26, 1952 (Coonor, Nilgiris, India: India Sunday School Union, India Edition).

God's People in Asian Industrial Society: the Report of the East Asia Christian Conference on Christians in Industry and Lay Training, Kyoto, Japan, May 18-25, 1966, ed. Robert M. Fukaka (Bangkok: EACC).

/ "Kyoto 1966 Report" /

GOODALL, Norman: "John R. Mott and the East Asia Christian Conference," in A Decisive Hour for the Christian Mission (J.R. Mott Memorial Lectures, 1960).

GOWING, P.G.: Islands Under the Cross: The Story of the Church in the Philippines (Manila: NCC in the Philippines, 1967).

GREER, R.M.: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore (Singapore: Malaya Publishing House, reprinted 1959).

HAINES, J.H.: Chinese of the Diaspora, IMC Research Pamphlets No. 14 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1965, for WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism).

Hakone Communiqué: Report of the East Asia Christian Literature Conference, Tokyo, Japan, August 15-21, 1958, ed. Howard F. Huff (Bangkok: EACC).

HOLLIS, Michael: Mission, Unity, Truth (London: Lutterworth Press, 1967).

HWANG, C.H.: "God's People in Asia Today," in Situation Conferences Report (1963).

- - - - - : "The question of freedom and responsibility for confession and unity in the indigenous Church," in Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings.

- - - - - : Joint Action for Mission in Formosa, CWME Research Pamphlets No. 15 (New York: Friendship Press, 1968).

IISAKA, Yoshiaki: "Modernization and international relations," in Seoul 1967 Report.

IMC Ad Interim Committee Meetings Minutes, 1937-1947 (Geneva: WCC Library).

IMC/WCC: Minutes of the East Asia Christian Literature Conference, Singapore, December 7-11, 1951 (Mysore: Wesley Press).

- - - : Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Commission on East Asia of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, Manila, Philippines Republic, February 4, 6 and 7, 1948 (Geneva: WCC Library).

Industrial Urban Mission in Asia: Report of the Consultation on Industrial Urban Mission and Laymen Abroad, Bangkok, January 25-29, 1968 (Bangkok: EACC).

Joint Action for Mission: Report and Proceedings of the Conference, Lahore, West Pakistan, November 29-30, 1962 (West Pakistan Christian Council).

Joint Action for Mission in Australia, containing report of the Singapore Situation Conference, March 1963, and Australian delegates' reports pointing to implications for Australian churches (Sydney: Joint Committee for the EACC, Australian Council for the WCC and National Missionary Council).

Kandy 1965 Report: see Confessional Families and the Churches in Asia.

3. KELLOCK, James: Break Through for Church Union in North India and Pakistan (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1965).

KRAMERS, R.P.: "Christian encounter with the living faiths of the Chinese," Church and Society, No. 2 (March 1961), p. 14.

Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report: see EACC ASSEMBLIES.

KWAN SIK KEM: "The Christian Church in Korea," IRM 36 (1947).

Kyoto 1966 Report: see God's People in Asian Industrial Society.

LATOURETTE, Kenneth Scott: "Ecumenical bearings of the missionary movement and the International Missionary Council," in ROUSE, Ruth and NEILL, S.C. (eds.), A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948 (London: SPCK, 1967).

LEE, Hahn-Been: "The political aspect of modernization," in Seoul 1967 Report.

LEE, Robert: Stranger in the Land: A Study of the Church in Japan (London: Lutterworth Press, 1967).

Liberation — Justice — Development: Asian Ecumenical Conference for Development, Workshop Reports and Recommendations, held at Tokyo, Japan, July 1970 (Bangkok: EACC).

LOH, K.A.: Fifty Years of the Anglican Church in Singapore Island, 1909-1959 (Singapore: Department of History, University of Singapore, 1963).

LYON, D. and MANUEL, A. (eds.): Renewal for Mission (Madras: The Diocesan Press, 1968, revised and enlarged edition).

MANIKAM, Rajah B. (ed.): Christianity and the Asian Revolution (Madras: Diocesan Press, 1954).

Men and Women in Home, Church, and Community in Asia: papers and statements of the Consultation on "The Christian Home in Changing Society," held at Petchburi, Thailand, 1962 (Bangkok: EACC).

Minutes of Meetings of the Joint Committee for the EACC, Australian Council for the WCC and National Missionary Council, from 1958-1964 (Geneva: WCC).

Mission of the Church and the Cultural Minorities, The: Report of a consultation held at Sagada, The Philippines, October 26-November 4, 1963 (Bangkok: EACC, 1964).

Mission Industry: Guidelines for the Development of the Church's Work in Asian Industrial Society (Bangkok: EACC Committee on Urban-Industrial Mission).

Missionary Service in Asia Today: A Report on a Consultation held by the Asian Methodist Advisory Committee, February 18-23, 1971, in co-operation with the Life, Message, Unity Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, Kuala Lumpur (Hong Kong: Chinese Christian Literature Council).

MOSES, D.G.: "The articulate word — the problem of communication," IRM 36 (1947).

- - - - - : "Jesus Christ, the Light of Asia and of the World — the task of the EACC," in Hong Kong 1960 Minutes.

MOTT: The John R. Mott Memorial Lectures, published as follows:

- (1) A Decisive Hour for the Christian Mission (London: SCM Press, 1960).
- (2) Christ's Ministry — And Ours (Singapore: Tien Wah Press, 1962).
- (3) / ....



- (3) Understanding the Tides of History, in SEAJT, Vol. 5, No. 4 (April 1964).
  - (4) The Christian Witness in Changing Asia, in SEAJT, Vol. 8, No. 3 (January 1967).
- NACPIL, E.P.: Mission and Change (Manila: EACC, 1968).
- NEILL, Stephen C.: "The Asian scene," ER I, No. 1 (Autumn 1948).
- - - - - : The Cross Over Asia (London: The Canterbury Press, 1948).
- New Forms of Christian Service and Participation in Korea: Report of The Consultation held April 13-16, 1962, in Onyang, Korea (Bangalore: CMS Press for EACC).
- New Forms of Christian Service and Participation, Nasrapur, October 1960: The Report of a Consultation for Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan (Kottayam: SCM Press, 1960).
- New Forms of Christian Service in the Philippines: Report of the Consultation called by the East Asia Christian Conference and held April 1-4, 1961, in Quezon City, Philippines (Manila: EACC).
- NEUBIGIN, Lesslie: "The message and the messengers," in Situation Conferences Report (1963).
- - - - - : "Mission to six continents," in H.E.FEY (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance (1970).
- NILES, D.T.: The Preacher's Task and the Stone of Stumbling, the Lyman Beecher Lectures for 1957 (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958).
- - - - - : "A church and its selfhood," in A Decisive Hour for the Christian Mission (J.R. Mott Memorial Lectures, 1960).
- - - - - : As Seeing the Invisible (London: SCM Press, 1962).
- - - - - : Upon the Earth: The Mission of God and the Missionary Enterprise of the Church (London: Lutterworth Press, 1962).
- - - - - : "The ecumenical task," in Situation Conferences Report (1963).
- - - - - : "Christ the Redeemer of Life," in Christ the Life (1965).
- - - - - : Buddhism and the Claims of Christ (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1967).
- - - - - : The Power at Work Among Us: A Series of Lenten Meditations (London: Epworth Press, 1968).
- - - - - : A Testament of Faith, compiled by Dayalan Niles (London: Epworth Press, 1972).
- One People — One Mission: The Situation Conferences of the East Asia Christian Conference, 1963 (Singapore: Tien Wah Press), ed. J.R. Fleming.
- / "Situation Conferences Report" /
- Pakistan — The Challenge 1964: Report of the Conference on "Christian Evangelism Today in Pakistan," May 2-5, 1963, Daska, West Pakistan, Board of Evangelism, West Pakistan Christian Council.
- PANIKKAR, R.: The Unknown Christ of Hinduism (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1968 reprint).
- PARMAR, S.L.: "Possibilities and problems of industrialization in Asia," in Kyoto 1966 Report.
- - - - - : "Student unrest," Asia Focus IV, No. 2 (April 1969).

PERKINS, Jill: Fragments of War: Asian Christian Service at work in Vietnam and Laos (Hong Kong: Chinese Christian Literature Council for Fellowship of the Least Coin, Asian Church Women's Conference, April 1970).

Place of Education in the Mission of the Church, The: Consultation Report, Singapore, April 4-8, 1961 (Wellawatte: Wesley Press).

Prapat 1957 Report: see EACC ASSEMBLIES.

PRIESTLY, E.: The Church of South India — Adventure in Union (London: The Church of South India Council in Great Britain, 1970).

QUIAMBAO, Jacob S.: "Developing a Christian viewpoint of responsible parenthood," in The Asian Churches and Responsible Parenthood (1964).

- - - - - : The Asian Family in a Changing Society (Bangkok: EACC, 1965).

Relevance of the Social Sciences in Contemporary Asia, The: University Teachers in Dialogue, sponsored by the WSCF in cooperation with the EACC, Gotemba, Japan, October 1-7, 1967 (Tokyo: WSCF Asian Office, 1968).

Religion, State and Ideologies in East Asia, ed. M.M. Thomas and M. Abel (Mysore: Wesley Press, 1965).

Report of the East Asia Secretary, presented by Rajah B. Manikam to the WCC Central Committee Meetings: Fifth Meeting Minutes, Lucknow, December 31, 1952-January 8, 1953, pp. 126-132; Eighth Meeting Minutes, Davos, Switzerland, August 2-8, 1955, pp. 130-134 (Geneva: WCC).

Report of the East Asia Theological Commission on Worship, ed. J.R. Chandran and J.R. Fleming (Geneva: Division of Studies, WCC, August 1962). This also appears in SEAJT, Vol. 4, No. 4 (April 1963).

Report from the Theological Education Fund 1958-1963, A (New York: TEF Office).

Revolution and Reconstruction. Contributors: H.F.J. Daniel, C.R. Hensman, C.I. Itty, C.T. Kurien, H.O. Morton, R.W. Taylor, M.M. Thomas (published by the Federal Council of the SCMs of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, 1957).

ROSE, Douglas A.: Seed of the Lotus: A Diary of the Asian Christian Youth Assembly of 1964-1965 (Bangkok: EACC).

SAMARTHA, S.J.: Introduction to Hallencreutz's New Approaches ... (1970).

SATO, Toshio: "The modernization of Asian societies viewed from a Christian ethical perspective," in Seoul 1967 Report.

Seminar Report — First Regional Art and Mass Communication Seminar, Tao Fong Shan, Hong Kong, November 2-9, 1964 (Tokyo: Asia Office, Christian Audio Visual Centre).

Seoul 1967 Report: see Asian Conference on Church and Society.

SHIOZUKI, Kentaro: "Our calling to service in Asia today," reflections on the WSCF Conference, Bangalore 1961, Student World, No. 3 (1962). This issue contains five of the main lectures given at the Conference.

Siantar 1957 Report: see Social Goals of New Asia.

SIMATUPANG, T.B.: "Life in Christ — called to service and nation-building," in Christ the Life (1965).

- - - - - : "Christian responsibility in the revolutionary process," in Kyoto 1966 Report.

Situation Conferences Reports: see One People — One Mission.

4 SOBREPENA, David: "Asian youth — its political and economic life," in Christ the Life (1965).

SOBREPENA, Enrique C.: "Christians as citizens," Church and Society, No. 7 (December 1963).

----- : That They May Be One (Manila: United Church of Christ in the Philippines, 2nd Edition 1964).

Social Goals of New Asia, The: Report of an Asian Christian Study Conference held at Pematang Siantar, North Sumatra, Indonesia, March 12-16, 1957 (Trivandrum: St. Joseph's Press, 1957). ["Siantar 1957 Report"]

SOLASEKHAR, Renuka Mukerji: Mission with Integrity in India: A Study in Changing Relationships between the Church and the Mission Boards (New York: Friendship Press, 1969).

Some Asian Orders of Worship, as composed and used at an East Asian Study Institute in Hong Kong 1965, ed. J.R. Fleming (Singapore: Colorprint Ltd.).

STEWART, William: India's Religious Frontier: Christian Presence Amid Modern Hinduism (London: SCM Press, 1964).

Structures for a Missionary Congregation: The Shape of the Christian Community in Asia Today (Singapore: Tien Wah Press, 1964), ed. J.R. Fleming and Ken Wright.

TAKENAKA, Masao: "A new understanding of the world and the need of theological renewal," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report.

----- : "The first fruits in Asia," in Christ's Ministry — And Ours (J.R. Mott Memorial Lectures, 1962).

----- : "Call to service, the service of the Church in the changing world today," ER XIV, No. 1 (October 1961).

----- : "New frontiers in the life and mission of the Church in Asia today," Student World LV, No. 3 (1962).

----- : "Christian encounter with men of non-Christian faiths in Japan," Church and Society II, Nos. 3 and 4 (December 1965).

----- : "Christ the Lord of Life and History," in Christ the Life (1965) — address given at the Asian Christian Youth Assembly 1964-65.

----- : "Between the old and the new worlds," in Egbert de Vries (ed.), Man in Community (1966).

----- : "Christians in industry — a reflective report," in Kyoto 1966 Report.

----- : Reconciliation and Renewal in Japan (New York: Friendship Press, revised edition 1967).

TASDIK, : Motives for Conversion in East Java since September 1965, an F.T.E. Research Paper (Singapore: The Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia, 1970).

TAYLOR, David M.: We Are Brought Together: Report of the National Conference of Australian Churches, February 2-11, 1960 (Sydney: Australian Council for the WCC, 1960).

Theological Education and Ministry: Report from the North East Asia Theological Education Consultation, Seoul, Korea, November 28-December 2, 1966 (Tainan, Taiwan: The Presbyterian Bookroom, 1967).

- This We Believe ... Asian Churches Confess their Faith, SEAJT Occasional Paper No. 1 (Hong Kong: Taosheng Publishing House, 1968) ed., Fleming, J.R.
- THOMAS, M.M.: "Some notes on a Christian interpretation of nationalism in Asia," in Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report.
- - - - - : "The changing scene in Asia," in New Forms of Christian Service in the Philippines (Quezon City, 1961).
- - - - - : "The Christian basis of social concern," Church and Society (September 1961).
- - - - - : "From the Editor," Church and Society, No. 4 (March 1962).
- - - - - : "Understanding the tides of history," SEAJT 5, No. 4 (April 1964).
- - - - - : The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution (London: SCM Press, 1966).
- - - - - : "Some Comments," ER XVIII, No. 1 (January 1966), a reply to H.H. Wolf's article in the same issue.
- - - - - : "Modernization of traditional societies," Seoul 1967 Report.
- - - - - : The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance, Confessing the Faith in India Series no. 5 (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1970).
- - - - - : Salvation and Humanisation: Some Crucial Issues of the Theology of Mission in Contemporary India, Indian Christian Thought Series No. 11 (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1971).
- TING, K.H.: Speech given at the All-Christian Peace Assembly, Prague June 1961, in Church and Society (March 1962).
- To Understand Christian Responsibility in the Asian Industrial Awakening: Report of the First Asian Conference on Industrial Evangelism, Manila, June 2-13, 1958 (Manila: United Church of Christ in the Philippines).
- U KYAW THAN: Book-review in ER VII, No. 2 (January 1955).
- - - - - : "The mighty works of God in our tongues," Kuala Lumpur 1959 Report.
- - - - - : "The Christian Laity in Asia," in Christ's Ministry — And Ours (J.R. Mott Memorial Lectures, 1962).
- - - - - (ed.): Proclaiming Christ in Asia: Statement on the work and witness of the EACC (Rangoon: EACC 1962).
- - - - - : "The second decade — witness in the seventies," in Tjibulan 1969 Minutes.
- VIEROW, Duain William: A History of Lutheranism in Western Malaysia and Singapore (New York: The Lutheran Church in America, 1968).
- WEBER, Hans-Ruedi: Asia and the Ecumenical Movement 1895-1961 (London: SCM Press, 1966).
- VEERASINGHE, S.J. de S.: Booklets on The Bible in Asia (Madras: The Christian Literature Society for United Bible Society, 1964 to 1965).
- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| (1) <u>Adult Bible Study</u>   | (4) <u>Reading the Bible Effectively</u>            |
| (2) <u>The Bible and Drama</u> | (5) <u>The Bible and Ethics</u>                     |
| (3) <u>Bible Weeks in Asia</u> | (6) <u>Bible Reading Habits of the Asian Church</u> |
- WOLF, H.H.: "Christ at work in history," ER XVIII, No. 1 (January 1966); see also THOMAS, MM, "Some Comments."



WON YONG KANG: "Christian response to the Asian Revolution," Student World LV, No. 3 (Third Quarter 1962).

4 - - - - - : "The first step forward toward the renewal of churches in Korea," in New Forms of Christian Service and Participation in Korea (Onyang, 1962).

- - - - - : "Common Mission — Common Life," in Situation Conferences Report (1963).

- - - - - : "The Church and nation-building: an appraisal," SEAJT 6, No. 2 (October 1964).

WOO, Franklin J.: "Nation-building or community building," Church and Society, No. 5 (September 1962).

YAMAOKA, Kikuo: "The Christian responsibility and industrial development in Asia," in Kyoto 1966 Report.

#### 4. PERIODICALS

Asia Focus, a quarterly magazine published by the East Asia Christian Conference, Bangkok, Thailand.

Church and Society, the Bulletin of the EACC Committee on Church and Society. First issue September 1960, Trivandrum, India. Bulletin of the EACC from 1962 to 1968. Publication ceased when Asia Focus began publication.

EACC News, news bulletin released fortnightly from EACC Office, Bangkok. First issue from 1961.

Illustrated Booklet on the EACC, 1961, Bangkok.

The Indian Journal of Theology, published biennially from March 1952, quarterly from 1957, Serempore, India.

Newsletters of Co-ordinating Office for Asian Evangelism, published from No. 6, Mount Sophia, Singapore.

The Northeast Asia Journal of Theology, issued twice yearly by the Northeast Asia Association of Theological Schools, as a theological voice for Korea, Taiwan and Japan. First issue March 1968. Tokyo, NCC Japan.

Religion and Society, the Bulletin of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society. First issue 1954. Published quarterly in Bangalore, India.

The South East Asia Journal of Theology, the organ of the Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia, published in Singapore, quarterly from July 1959, biennially from 1969.

#### 5. OTHER BIBLIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

The file of documents, correspondence and other materials on "Asia and the Ecumenical Movement" gathered by Hans-Ruedi Weber and kept in the archives of the Ecumenical Institute, Celigny, Switzerland.

In the footnotes of Weber's book, Asia and the Ecumenical Movement 1895-1961.

Ideas and Services, D.T. Niles' Report to the EACC Fourth Assembly, Bangkok, 1968, pp. 30-32.

Christianity in Southeast Asia: A Bibliographical Guide, an annotated bibliography of selected references in Western languages, by Gerald H. Anderson (New York: The Missionary Research Library, 1966).

. . . . .

B. SECONDARY SOURCES

1. REPORTS, ARTICLES AND BOOKS

ANDERSON, G.H.: "The Singapore Congress on Evangelism," Encounter Vol. 32, No. 2 (Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, n.d.).

- - - - - (ed.): The Theology of the Christian Mission (London: SCM Press, 1961).

Anticipation: Christian Social Thought in Future Perspective, papers for the information of participants in the ecumenical enquiry on "The Future of Man and Society in a World of Science-Based Technology" (Geneva: Department on Church and Society, WCC, 1970).

BAYNE, Stephen F., Jr. (ed.): Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ (London: SPCK, 1965).

BELL, G.K.A. (ed.): Documents on Christian Unity, Third Series 1930-1948, Fourth Series 1948-1957 (London: Oxford University Press, 1948 and 1958).

BERGER, Peter L.: A Rumour of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971).

BERKHOF, H.: Christ the Meaning of History (London: SCM Press, 1966).

Centres of Renewal for Study and Lay Training (Geneva: Department on the Laity, WCC, 1964).

Churches of Europe and the Churches of the Other Continents, The: Report of a Consultation held at Basle, Switzerland, November 27-30, 1967 (Geneva: Conference of European Churches, 1968).

Committee on Society, Development and Peace, The, a prospectus on the history, nature, purpose and projected programmes of SODEPAX (Geneva: WCC).

CONFESSONALISM: Minutes of Meetings of World Confessional Families, and of Meetings of Secretaries of World Confessional Organisations at Geneva, Switzerland, from 1962 to 1969. In particular:-

- (1) Meeting of World Confessional Groups, April 1962.
- (2) Consultation on World Confessionalism, October 1963.
- (3) Enlarged Meeting of the World Confessional Bodies, October 1965.
- (4) Meeting of Representatives of World Confessional Bodies, October 1965.
- (5) Meeting of Secretaries of World Confessional Families, October 1967.
- (6) Conference of Secretaries of World Confessional Families, November 1968, November 1969.

(Available from LWF Office, Geneva.)



- CREWE, Philip (ed.): Keele '67: The National Evangelical Anglican Congress Statement (London: Church Pastoral-Aid Society, 1967).
- CROWE, Paul A., Jr.: The Ecumenical Movement in Bibliographical Outline (New York: Department of Faith and Order, NCC in the USA, 1965).
- DICKINSON, Richard: Line and Plummet: The Churches and Development (Geneva: WCC, 1968).
- Dilemmas and Opportunities: Christian Action in Rapid Social Change. Report of an International Ecumenical Study Conference, Thessalonica, Greece, July 25-August 2, 1959 (Geneva: Department on Church and Society, WCC, 1959).
- DUFF, Edward: The Social Thought of the World Council of Churches (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956).
- Ecumenical Review, V, No. 3 (April 1953): Report of the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches.
- - - - - VIII, No. 1 (October 1955): Report of the General Secretary to the World Council of Churches.
- - - - - VIII, No. 3 (April 1956): "World Council Diary."
- EDWARDS, David L.: Religion and Change (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969).
- ELLIOTT, C.: The Development Debate (London: SCM Press, 1971).
- Evolution of DICARWS 1944-1968, The, a historical account of the DICARWS prepared by the DICARWS, WCC (Geneva: Dec. 1968).
- FEY, Harold E. (ed.): The Ecumenical Advance, A History of the Ecumenical Movement, Volume Two, 1948-1968 (London: SPCK, 1970).
- - - - - : "Confessional families and the ecumenical movement," in H.E. FEY (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance (1970).
- FORMAN, Charles W. (ed.): Christianity in the Non-Western World (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967).
- GAINES, David P.: The World Council of Churches, A Study of its Background and History (Peterborough, New Hampshire: Richard R. Smith Co. Inc., 1966).
- GOLLWITZER, H.: The Rich Christians and Poor Lazarus, translated by David Cairns (Edinburgh: The St. Andrew Press, 1970).
- GOODALL, Norman: "Some notes on world confessionalism and the ecumenical movement," in Confessionalism 1962 Minutes.
- - - - - (ed.): The Uppsala Report 1968, Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala, July 4-20, 1968 (Geneva: WCC, 1968).
- GRUBER, Pamela H. (ed.): Fetters of Injustice, Report of an ecumenical consultation on Ecumenical Assistance to Development Projects, 26-31 January, 1970, Montreux, Switzerland (Geneva: WCC, 1970).
- GUTIERREZ, Merino G.: "The meaning of development," in In Search of a Theology of Development (1969).
- HALLENCREUTZ, Carl F.: New Approaches to Men of Other Faiths, Research Pamphlets No. 18 (Geneva: WCC, 1970).
- HAYWARD, Victor E.W.: "The Relationship between Regional and National Councils and World Confessional Families," a report presented to a meeting of a Working Party of the World Confessional Bodies at Geneva, May 31, 1967 (Exhibit III).

- HENRY, Carl F.H. and MOONEYHAM, W. Stanley (eds.): One Race One Gospel One Task: Addresses, papers and reports of the World Congress on Evangelism held at Berlin, October 25-November 4, 1966 (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1967).
- HORNER, N.A. (ed.): Protestant Crosscurrents in Mission: The Ecumenical-Conservative Encounter (Nashville and New York: Abingdon Press, 1968).
- HUDSON, D.: The Ecumenical Movement in World Affairs (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969).
- IMC 1938 Tambaram Meeting Series, The: Reports of the Meeting in seven volumes, in particular:-  
Vol. I - The Authority of the Faith.  
Vol. IV - The Life of the Church.  
Vol. V - The Economic Basis of the Church.  
Vol. VII - Addresses and Other Records.  
(London: Oxford University Press, 1939).
- In Search of a Theology of Development: Papers from a Consultation on Theology and Development held by SODEPAX in Cartigny, Switzerland, November 1969 (Geneva: SODEPAX, WCC).
- JARRETT-KERR, Martin: Christ and the New Nations (London: SPCK 1966).
- JAY, Eric: Twenty Questions on World Development (London: Christian Aid, 1970).
- KEE, Alistair: The Way to Transcendence, Christian Faith Without Belief in God (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971).
- KRAEMER, Hendrik: The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World (New York: Harper, 1938).
- - - - - : The Communication of the Christian Faith (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956).
- - - - - : Religion and the Christian Faith (London: Lutterworth Press, 1956).
- - - - - : World Culture and World Religion: The Coming Dialogue (London: Lutterworth Press, 1960).
- KRAUSE, W. von: "Engagement in the mission and unity of the Church," in Kandy 1965 Report.
- KULANDRAN, S.: Grace in Christianity and Hinduism (London: Lutterworth Press, 1964).
- Lambeth Conference 1968, The: Resolutions and Reports (London: SPCK and Seabury Press, 1968).
- LATOURETTE, K.S.: Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, Vol. V, The Twentieth Century Outside Europe (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1963).
- LEUNG, Peter: The Evangelical Resurgence after the Second World War and its Relation with the Modern Ecumenical Movement, unpublished M.Theol. (S.E. Asia) thesis, South East Asia Graduate School of Theology, Singapore (1969).
- LINDSELL, Harold (ed.): The Church's Worldwide Mission, Proceedings of the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, USA, April 9-16, 1966 (Texas, Waco: Word Books, 1967).
- LOFFLER, Paul (ed.), Secular Man and Christian Mission, CWME Study Pamphlets No. 3 (New York: Friendship Press, 1968).
- MARGULL, H.J.: Hope in Action, The Church's Task in the World, translated by Eugene Peters (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962).

- MINEAR, Paul S. (ed.): Faith and Order Findings: The Report to the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, Montreal, 1963 (London: SCM Press, 1963).
- Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, LWF, Waterloo, Canada, June 11-17, 1967 (Geneva: LWF Office).
- Minutes of WCC Central Committee Meetings from 1948 to 1968; and Letters to Member Churches from the Committee (Geneva: WCC).
- Missionary Obligation of the Church, The: LMC Meeting at Willingen, Germany, July 5-17, 1952 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1952).
- MOLTMANN, Jurgen: The Theology of Hope (London: SCM Press, 1967).
- MOONEYHAM, W. Stanley (ed.): Christ Seeks Asia: Asia-South Pacific Congress on Evangelism, Official Reference Volume, Papers and Reports (Hong Kong: The Rock House Publishers, 1969). The Congress was held in Singapore, Nov. 5-13, 1968.
- MUDGE, Lewis S.: "The world confessional bodies and the ecumenical movement," in Confessionalism 1962 Minutes.
- NEILL, Stephen C.: Christian Partnership (London: SCM Press, 1952).
- : The Unfinished Task (London: Lutterworth Press, 1957).
- : Creative Tensions (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1959).
- (ed.): Twentieth Century Christianity (London: William Collins and Sons Ltd., 1961).
- NEILL, S.C. and WEBER, Hans-Ruedi (eds.): The Layman in Christian History (London: SCM Press, 1963).
- NEILL, S.C., ANDERSON, G.H. and GOODWIN, J. (eds.): Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission (London: Lutterworth Press, 1970).
- NEWBIGIN, J.E. Lesslie: The Reunion of the Church (London: SCM Press, 1948).
- : The Household of God (London: SCM Press, 1953).
- : One Body, One Gospel, One World (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958).
- : A Faith for this One World? (New York: Harper, 1961).
- : The Relevance of Trinitarian Doctrine for Today's Mission, CWME Study Pamphlets No. 2 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1963).
- : The Finality of Christ (London: SCM Press, 1969).
- NIDA, E.A.: Customs, Culture and Christianity (London: The Tyndale Press, 1963).
- OHM, Thomas: Asia Looks at Western Christianity (Freiburg: Herder; London: Nelson, 1959).
- One World One Task: Report of the Evangelical Alliance Commission on World Mission, Evangelical Alliance (London: Scripture Union, 1971).
- ORCHARD, Ronald K. (ed.): The Ghana Assembly of the LMC 1957/1958, Selected Papers, with an Essay on the Role of the LMC (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958).
- (ed.): Witness in Six Continents, Records of the Meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches held in Mexico City, December 8-19, 1963 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964).



PATTERSON, G.N.: Christianity in Communist China (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1969).

"Populorum Progressio", Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Paul VI Pope to the Bishops, Priests, Religious, the Faithful and to All Men of Good Will (1967). This Letter was included as supplement in World Poverty and British Responsibility.

PRESTON, R.H. (ed.): Technology and Social Justice, An International Symposium on the Social and Economic Teaching of the World Council of Churches from Geneva 1966 to Uppsala 1968 (London: SCM Press, 1971).

RANSON, C.W. (ed.): Renewal and Advance: Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World, ILC Meeting at Whitby, 1947 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1948).

RICHARDSON, William J. (ed.): China and Christian Responsibility, A Symposium (New York: Friendship Press, 1968).

The Rise of China: Report of an Asian Working Party held under the auspices of the Political Commission of the World Student Christian Federation, WSCF Secretariat, Geneva, 1967.

ROGER, P.C. and VISCHER, L. (eds.): The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, Montreal, 1963 (London: SCM Press, 1963).

ROSSEL, Jacques: Mission in a Dynamic Society (London: SCM Press, 1968).

ROUSE, Ruth and NEILL, S.C. (eds.): A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948 (London: SPCK, 1967).

ROWE, Richard C.: Bible Study in the World Council of Churches, Research Pamphlet No. 16 (Geneva: WCC, 1969).

SCHERER, James A.: Mission and Unity in Lutheranism, A Study in Confession and Ecumenicity (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969).

SINCLAIR, Margaret: "Christian witness in a revolutionary world," IRM 37 (1948).

SMITH, R.G.: Secular Christianity (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1966).

SOVIK, Arne: "Freedom and responsibility for confession and unity in the indigenous Church," in Confessionalism 1963 Proceedings.

Specific European Responsibilities in Relation to Africa and Asia, The: Report from a European ecumenical consultation held at Odense, Denmark, August 8-11, 1958 (Geneva: Department on Church and Society, WCC).

Statement of the Beirut Conference on World Cooperation for Development, April 21-27, 1968, jointly sponsored by WCC and the Roman Catholic Church. This Statement can also be found in Dickinson's Line and Plummet, pp. 103-106.

Statement by the Consultation on the Results of the EACC "Situation Conferences" on Joint Action for Mission, High Leigh, May 1964 (London: Conference of British Missionary Societies and the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism).

Statements and Resolutions of the Assembly, LWF, Evian, France, August 14-24, 1970: Minutes (Document 21), Appendix A (Geneva: LWF Office).

Swanwick Consultation: Digest of the 1966 World Consultation on Inter-Church Aid at Swanwick, Great Britain (Geneva: WCC, 1966).

TAYLOR, John V.: For All the World: The Christian Mission in the Modern Age (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1966).

- The Time is Now: Anglican Consultative Council, First Meeting, Limuru, Kenya, February 23-March 5, 1971 (London: SPCK, 1971).
- THOMAS, Owen C.(ed.): Attitudes Toward Other Religions: Some Christian Interpretations (London: SCM Press, 1969).
- TOMKINS, Oliver S. (ed.): The Third World Conference on Faith and Order, Lund 1952 (London: SCM Press, 1953).
- TOYNBEE, Arnold: Christianity Among the Religions of the World (London: Oxford University Press, 1958).
- Uppsala Report 1968, The: Section III, "World Economic and Social Development" (pp. 45-55); Section IV, "Towards Justice and Peace in International Affairs" (pp. 60-71).
- VAN DUSEN, Henry P.: One Great Ground of Hope (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961).
- VAN LEEUWEN, A. Th.: Christianity in World History, translated by H.H. Hoskins (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964).
- VISCHER, L. (ed.): A Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement 1927-1963 (St. Louis, Missouri: The Bethany Press, 1963).
- VISSER 'T HOOFT, W.A.(ed.): The Evanston Report, The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches 1954 (London: SCM Press, 1955).
- (ed.): The New Delhi Report, The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1961 (New York: Association Press, 1962).
- WEBER, Hans-Ruedi: "The younger churches," in NEILL, S.C. and WEBER, H-R. (eds.), The Layman in Christian History (1963).
- : "Out of all continents and nations," in H.E. FEY (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance (1970).
- World Council of Churches Amsterdam Assembly Series (London: SCM Press, 1948).
- Vol. I - The Universal Church in God's Design.
- Vol. II - The Church's Witness to God's Design.
- Vol. III - The Church and the Disorder of Society.
- Vol. IV - The Church and the International Disorder.
- Vol. V - The Official Assembly Report.
- World Christian Handbook, first issued 1949, World Dominion Press, London.
- World Conference on Church and Society, Geneva, July 12-26, 1966, Preparatory Studies (New York: Association Press; London: SCM Press, 1966):-
- Christian Social Ethics in a Changing World, ed. John C. Bennett.
- Responsible Government in a Revolutionary Age, ed. Z.K. Matthews.
- Economic Growth in World Perspective, ed. Denys Munby.
- Man in Community, ed. Egbert de Vries.
- World Missionary Conference 1910, Edinburgh, Scotland: Reports of the Conference in nine volumes, in particular Vol. IX, The History and Records of the Conference (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier).
- World Poverty and British Responsibility, A Report commended by the British Council of Churches (London: SCM Press, 2nd Edition 1967).
- YANG, C.K.: Religion in Chinese Society (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967).

## 2. PERIODICALS /.....

## 2. PERIODICALS

Christianity Today, published fortnightly (Washington D.C.: Christianity Today Inc.).

Ecumenical Review, The, a quarterly, the official organ of the WCC. First issue October 1948 (Geneva: WCC).

International Review of Mission, The, a quarterly, the official organ of the I.M.C., 1912-1961, and of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC when the I.M.C. merged with WCC in 1961 (Geneva: WCC).

Laity, the Bulletin of the Department on the Laity, WCC, published biennially (Geneva: WCC).

Student World, a quarterly magazine published by the World Student Christian Federation, Geneva, Switzerland.

Study Encounter, a quarterly, published by the Staff Advisory Group on Studies of the WCC (Geneva).

. . . . .

## C. THE EAST ASIAN SITUATION AFTER THE 2nd WORLD WAR

### 1. REPORTS, ARTICLES AND BOOKS

ABEGG, L.: The Mind of East Asia (London: Thames and Hudson, 1952).

ADIE, W.A.C.: "China's algebra of revolution," in WINT, Guy (ed.), Asia, A Handbook (1965).

ARON, Raymond: Progress and Disillusion, The Dialectics of Modern Society (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972).

BELLAH, Robert N. (ed.): Religion and Progress in Modern Asia (New York: The Free Press; London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1965).

BROWN, Neville: A History of the World in the Twentieth Century. Part 3, 1945-1968 (London: Pan Books Ltd., 1970).

COLE, J.P.: Geography of World Affairs (Middlesex: Penguin Books, Fourth Edition 1972).

CROZIER, Brian: "South-East Asia," in LUARD, Evan (ed.), The Cold War (1964).

- - - - - : Southeast Asia in Turmoil (Middlesex: Penguin Books, Revised Edition 1968).

EDWARD, Michael: Asia in Balance (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962).

EHRLICH, P.R.: The Population Bomb (London: A Ballantine/Friends of the Earth Book, 1971).

FALL, B.B. (ed.): Ho Chi Minh on Revolution, Selected Writings, 1920-1966, (New York: Signet Books, 1968).

FITZGERALD, C.P.: "Pan-Asianism," in WINT, Guy (ed.), Asia, A Handbook (1965).

- - - - - : "Political innovations in Asia," in WINT, Guy (ed.), Asia, A Handbook (1965).



GOH, Keng Swee: Decade of Achievement (Singapore: Ministry of Culture Publication, 1970).

HAN, Suyin: China in the Year 2001 (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1970).

HARRIS, N.: Beliefs in Society: The Problem of Ideology (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971).

HARRIS, Richard: "Communism in Asia," in WINT, Guy (ed.), Asia, A Handbook (1965).

HEENSLAN, C.R.: China—Yellow Peril? Red Hope? (London: SCM Press, 1968).

HERBERT, Jean: An Introduction to Asia, translated by Manu Banerji (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965).

HO CHI MINH: see FALL, B.B.

HUDSON, Geoffrey: "The rise of Communist power in the Far East," in LUARD, Evan (ed.), The Cold War (1964).

KIRBY, E. Stuart: Economic Development in East Asia (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967).

Manila Pact and Pacific Charter (Bangkok: Public Information Office, SEATO Headquarters, n.d.).

MAO TSE-TUNG: Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967).

Mirror, The (Singapore), Vol. 6, No. 1 (January 5, 1970): "Green Revolution."

----- Vol. 6, No. 1 (January 5, 1970): "Population — Growth and Quality."

----- Vol. 6, No. 17 (April 27, 1970): "New Directions for Asian Politics."

----- Vol. 6, No. 17 (April 27, 1970): "The Social Situation in the ECAFE Region."

----- Vol. 7, No. 4 (January 25, 1971): "Economic Development Effort."

----- Vol. 7, No. 7 (February 15, 1971): "Another Decade of Strife Ahead."

----- Vol. 7, No. 20 (May 17, 1971): "Selecting the Goals."

MYRDAL, Gunnar: Asian Drama, An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations, 3 vols. (London: The Penguin Press, 1968).

----- : The Challenge of World Poverty: A World Anti-Poverty Programme in Outline (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1970).

Observer, The (London), March 28, 1971: "Overseas aid or Neo-Colonialism?" by Ben Whitaker, a former junior minister at Overseas Development Department of the British Labour Government.

Overseas Development Institute Review, published by the Overseas Development Institute Ltd., London. In particular, Review, 3 "British Development Policies," 1969.

PANIKKAR, K.M.: Asia and Western Dominance — A Survey of the Vasco Da Gama Epoch of Asian History 1498-1945 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1953).

Partnership in Development: Report of the Commission on International Development (London: Pall Mall Press, 1969).

["Pearson Report"]

Pearson Report: See Partnership in Development.

POLLARD, Sidney: The Idea of Progress (Middlesex: Penguin Books 1971).

ROSINGER, Lawrence and Associates: The State of Asia, A Contemporary Survey, issued under the auspices of the American Institute of Pacific Relations (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1951).

RYCROFT, W. Stanley and CLEMER, Myrtle M. (eds.): A Factual Study of Asia (New York: Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, The United Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1963).

SCHRAM, S.R.: The Political Thought of Mao Tse Tung (Middlesex: Penguin Books, reprinted 1971).

SEERS, Dudley and JOY, Leonard (eds.): Development in a Divided World (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971).

SIDDIQI, Aslam: "The role of the military in Asia," in WINT, Guy (ed.), Asia, A Handbook (1965).

SINGTON, Derrick: "Malaysia," in WINT, Guy (ed.), Asia, A Handbook (1965).

South-East Asia Round Table, The: Report of a symposium on traditional cultures and technological progress in South-East Asia, held at Bangkok, Thailand, January 27-February 2, 1958 (Bangkok: SEATO Headquarters).

STAVRIANOS, L.S.: The World Since 1500, A Global History (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1966).

SULZBERGER, C.L.: "Revolutionary modesty of developing nations," The Mirror (Singapore), Vol. 7, No. 13 (March 29, 1971).

THEOBALD, Robert: The Rich and the Poor: A Study of the Economics of Rising Expectations (New York: The New American Library, A Mentor Book, 1960).

-----: The Challenge of Abundance (New York: The New American Library, A Mentor Book, 1962).

THICH NHAT HANH: Vietnam -- The Lotus in the Sea of Fire (London: SCM Press, 1967).

Time Magazine, Dec. 14, 1970: "In Search of a Foreign Policy," feature article.

-----, April 26, 1971: "The Ping Heard Round the World," feature article.

TOYNBEE, Arnold: Surviving the Future (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

UNCTAD Commodity Survey, published yearly by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (New York: United Nations).

UN: Growth of the World's Urban and Rural Population 1920-2000, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Studies No. 44 (New York: United Nations).

UN: The Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends: A Summary of the Findings on the Relationship between Population Changes and Economic and Social Conditions (New York: Department of Social Affairs, United Nations, 1953).

UN: Yearbook of the United Nations, published yearly by the United Nations, (New York).

WHEELER, Harvey: Democracy in a Revolutionary Era (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971. First published in the USA by Frederick A. Praeger, 1968).

WILSON, D.: A Quarter of Mankind: An Anatomy of China Today (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1968).

WINT, Guy (ed.): Asia, A Handbook (London: Anthony Blond Ltd., 1965).

## 2. PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS

The Daily Telegraph (London).

Far Eastern Economic Review, published by the Far Eastern Economic Review Ltd., Hong Kong. Also Far Eastern Economic Review Yearbook, published yearly.

The Mirror (Singapore: Ministry of Culture), a weekly almanac of current affairs.

Malaysian Digest (Kuala Lumpur, West Malaysia: Federal Department of Information).

The Observer (London).

Time Magazine, a weekly news-magazine (New York: Rockefeller Center).

The Times and The Sunday Times (London).